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"SOMETHING HAS HAPPENED; HE CANNOT COME," WHISPERED ENOCH NERVOUSLY.

Frontis. *Washington at Monmouth, p. 56.*

WITH WASHINGTON AT MONMOUTH.

A STORY OF THREE PHILADELPHIA BOYS.

By JAMES OTIS. [pseud.]

Kaler, James Otis

With Eight Page Illustrations by J. Watson Davis.

NEW YORK:
A. L. BURT, PUBLISHER.

[c 1897]
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WITH WASHINGTON AT MONMOUTH.

CHAPTER I.

A "MARKET-STOPPER."

On the morning of April 2, 1778, three boys, the eldest of whom was not more than sixteen years of age and the youngest hardly a year his junior, were standing on that side of the town-house nearest the pillory, in the city of Philadelphia.

They were not engaged in sportive conversation, nor occupied with schemes for pleasure, as is usually the case with boys of such age; but wore a graver look than seemed suitable to youth under ordinary circumstances.

These boys were witnessing and taking part in events decidedly startling—events well calculated to impress themselves upon the minds even of children.

It is hardly necessary, because such fact is familiar to all Americans, to say that on the 26th of September, 1777, General Howe took possession of the city of Philadelphia, and it was yet occupied by the British forces on this 2d day of April, 1778.

The past winter had been one of gayety for the

wealthy Tory inhabitants of the city, since the English officers were pleased to spend their time in every form of revelry, and ever ready to accept the more than generous hospitality which was extended by such of the citizens as were desirous of remaining under British rule.

The officers of the army indulged to the utmost their love for luxury and ease while serving in the command of the indolent Howe, and the privates had so far followed the example set by their superiors that the king's troops had become more demoralized by this winter of idleness than could have been possible under almost any other circumstances.

So great was this demoralization that Benjamin Franklin was able to say with truth, when taunted with the fact that the enemy had captured the city:

"General Howe has not taken Philadelphia; Philadelphia has taken General Howe."

It was at about the time of which this story treats that the British government decided to give command of the forces under General Howe to Sir Henry Clinton, and those of the population loyal to the cause of freedom were considerably exercised in mind as to how this change of officers might effect them.

The three boys, who have as yet hardly been introduced, were by no means prominent in the cause of freedom; in fact they had but just arrived at an age when they began to realize their responsibilities,

and as yet had been powerless to perform any great deed in behalf of the cause.

The eldest was Jacob Ludwick, son of that Christopher Ludwick, baker of Germantown, who, having amassed considerable property before the beginning of the struggle for freedom, gave one entire half of it for the cause, and swore at the same time never to shave until the United States were free and independent.

As is known, Washington made him baker-general of the army; but as yet young Jacob had never been able to gain his father's consent to his enlisting.

The second of the trio in point of age was Seth Graydon, son of that Widow Graydon who kept a boarding-house in Drinker's Alley, which had been largely patronized during the winter by officers of the Forty-second Highland and the Royal Irish regiments.

The third was Enoch Ball, also the son of a widow, and his mother it was who had for several years taught French and dancing in her home on Letitia Street.

These three boys had grown old beyond their years during the past winter.

They had witnessed, and more particularly in the case of Seth Graydon, the revelry of the officers who had come to whip into submission the struggling patriots, and well knew to what desperate straits, even for the common necessities of life, were driven the families of those men who had enlisted in the American army.

They saw the invading foe and their sympathizers enjoying every luxury of the table, while hundreds of the poorer classes were literally starving.

Those loyal to the American cause had suffered severely from lack of food and fuel, and were now questioning as to whether, under this newly appointed commander, they would not be called upon to bear yet greater troubles.

Neither of these three lads had ever been hungrier than boys of their age usually are at all times; yet they realized what suffering might come, if, as had been rumored, Sir Henry Clinton was an officer who believed harsh measures necesary when dealing with "rebels."

"There's no doubt about the order having been given," Seth said in reply to a question from one of his companions. "The officers were discussing it last evening, and seemed to think, as they always do, that I can work them no harm through learning their secrets. The time shall come, however, if they stay here much longer, when I will prove that even a boy can be of service to his country."

"But what is the order?" Enoch Ball asked impatiently.

"The entire army is to be in readiness, with three days' rations, to start at a moment's warning on some maneuver which will be executed between now and the fifth of this month."

"Do you suppose General Howe intends to march to Valley Forge?" Jacob asked, with no slight show of anxiety as he thought that his father might be in danger.

"That cannot be. Since the British took possession of Philadelphia there have been many better opportunities for them to fall upon General Washington and his command than now, and it is not likely the enemy would have remained idle all winter waiting to strike a blow after our friends were prepared for it."

"But *are* they prepared for it?" Jacob asked.

"So I heard Lord Gordon say last night. He declared that, thanks to the instructions of the Baron de Steuben, the American troops were never in better condition, so far as discipline is concerned, than they are at present, and now that the sufferings caused by the severe winter have come to an end, they are in good spirits."

"But if the command is to be taken from General Howe, why is he getting ready for any movement?"

"If I could answer that question, Enoch, I might be able to give even General Washington information for which he would thank me."

"Do you know why General Howe is to be removed from his command?"

"I have heard the British officers say he was severely censured by Parliament for his blunder in causing the disaster to Burgoyne's army by going to the Chesapeake as he did. It seems that he has asked permission to go home, and that is why Sir Henry Clinton has been given the command."

"This maneuver to be executed before the fifth may be one which has been ordered in advance by Clinton," Jacob suggested.

"If such had been the case, the officers who were discussing the matter would have said so."

"Whether it be the one or the other, I do not understand how we can be benefited by having the information. Why did you say that at last we had work to do?"

"For this reason, Enoch Ball: We are now old enough to be of some service to the cause. Jacob's father refuses to allow him to enlist. Mother insists I must remain at home while the British are in possession of the city, and that is also the reason why you are not already a soldier. Now even though we are not in the army, it may be possible for us to aid our friends, and surely nothing at this time can be more important than making them acquainted with the fact that the Britishers are getting ready for some important movement."

"But how can we let them know?" Enoch asked with considerable show of trepidation, for it was not yet two weeks since he had seen a man flogged with an hundred lashes because of its being suspected that his intention was to enter the American lines.

"It is not impossible for one of us to find an officer within a few miles of the town who would forward the information. I believe I know where General Reed and General Cadwalader are, or, at least, how to reach them."

"Would you attempt to leave the city on such an errand?"

"I would, and will."

"And you expect us to go with you?" Enoch continued, showing yet greater signs of fear.

"Not unless you choose."

"Two can do the work as well as three," Jacob interrupted. "If you and I go, Seth, there is no reason why Enoch need be afraid, for we shan't need him."

"But do you think I would let you make an attempt to aid the cause, and not be with you?"

"You are frightened now at the very thought of it," Jacob replied scornfully.

"Yes; and if I am, what then? I may be afraid, for it was terrible to see that poor man's back cut with the lash; but yet I should go if you went."

"Now you are showing yourself to be brave, Enoch," Seth said approvingly, but before he could finish the sentence a shouting, yelling mob turned from High Street * into Second, and the boys darted forward to learn the cause of the commotion.

"They have captured another market-stopper," Jacob said a moment later as they neared the noisy throng.

The term he used was one given by the British to those Americans stationed near the city to prevent such farmers as had no scruples against selling provisions to the enemy from disposing of their wares save to those who favored the cause.

During the winter just passed General Howe had attempted to do little more than keep the roads open

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* Now Market Street.

in order that the country people might come in with their marketing, and severe was the punishment he caused to be meted out to those who would thus attempt to shut off the supplies.

"It is the farmers themselves who should be whipped!" Jacob cried indignantly. "They care not how much aid is given to the enemy so that money comes into their pockets, and the freedom of their country is as nothing compared with the price at which eggs, butter or potatoes can be sold."

"It is better to keep a quiet tongue, Jacob Ludwick," Seth whispered. "There are too many redcoats for us in the crowd, and if one of them should hear your words, that soldier would not be the only one pilloried this day."

"I do not care to fall into their clutches, and therefore I remain silent while good patriots like this light-horseman are being abused; but if it ever happens that the odds are more nearly even I shall say for once to a redcoat what is in my mind."

"And get a flogging for your pains, without having done any one good?"

"As to whether I am whipped depends upon how well the Britisher can fight, while I'm certain great good will be done me by the opportunity to use my tongue as I please."

"Don't talk so loud," Enoch whispered impatiently. "We shall all find ourselves in the jail or on the the pillory unless you are careful."

It was quite time Jacob put a bridle on his tongue; the throng of idlers and soldiers who were

amusing themselves by pelting the light-horseman with stale eggs, decaying vegetables, or other filth, had now approached so near the boys that words even less loudly spoken could have been overheard.

The prisoner made no effort to protect himself from the unsavory shower; he probably realized that any attempt to do so would only result in his being used more roughly, and did his best to appear unconcerned.

"Do not stay here while he is being whipped," Seth whispered. "What we saw this day a week ago was more than enough for me, and I hope I'll never witness another flogging."

"Wait awhile," and Jacob went nearer the prisoner. "I do not think this one is to be served in that way. See! they are going to put him on the pillory, and by stopping here until the beasts are weary of abusing a helpless man we may be able to render him some assistance."

Seth no longer insisted on leaving the place; the thought had come into his mind that this soldier could tell him where the information he believed the Americans should have would be the most valuable, and it was not improbable they might have an opportunity to talk with him privately.

During half an hour after the prisoner had been placed in the pillory the mob jeered, hooted and pelted him with missiles of every description, and then, one by one, tiring of the inhuman sport, they left the yard for fresh amusement, until the three boys and the horseman were alone, save for the

curious ones who, passing by on the street, stopped a moment to look at the soldier.

"It will not always be allowed that the men who are fighting for our liberties can be treated like this in Philadelphia," Seth said in a cautious tone as he stepped so near the pillory that those at the entrance of the yard could not overhear the words.

"Are you a friend?" the prisoner asked with some show of surprise. "I had begun to think there were none left in this town since Howe has made so brave a show, while we at Valley Forge have been starving."

"There are as many friends to the cause in the city as before the Britishers came; but it can do no good for that fact to be known while we are powerless to act."

"You are old enough to serve in the ranks, and should be there, if you would aid the cause."

"So we shall be in good time, friend; but it is not all who are the most willing that can do as they choose. This boy," and Seth pulled Jacob forward, "is the son of Ludwick the baker, of whom you must have heard."

"Heard, lad? Why I know Chris Ludwick as well as I know myself! Do you tell me that he won't allow his son to enlist?"

"He has promised to give his consent this spring, and when Jacob signs the rolls Enoch and I will go with him."

"Then you will have done only that which is your duty. If General Washington could have as many

men as he needs, this war would soon be ended, with the United States free and independent."

"We shall do our share," Seth replied, speaking more hurriedly lest those who had captured the prisoner should put an end to the interview before he had accomplished his purpose. "If you believe us to be friends, tell me where we can find an officer of the American army?"

"I have heard you say you were friends; but even if I was able to answer your question I should hesitate about giving any information until I had better surety of your purpose than words which might be spoken by any one."

"Then you shall know why I asked, and after that say if we may be trusted. My mother keeps a boarding-house, and among her guests are several British officers; last night I heard them talking about an order which has just been issued, to the effect that a large portion of the army is to be ready to move at a moment's warning. From what they said, it seems certain some important move is to be made before the fifth of the month."

"Why are you so certain as to the date?" the man asked after a brief pause, during which he appeared to be settling some question in his own mind.

"It was so said by the officers."

"And you have no idea of what may be on foot?"

"I know nothing, except as I have told you. Those who were talking appeared to be ignorant of what it meant."

The prisoner remained silent several moments, and then said in a whisper:

"I shall trust you, lads, for it seems necessary the information should be known at headquarters. If you are deceiving me, you must always remember it as a scurvy trick, and one not worthy even a Tory."

"But we are not deceiving you, nor are we Tories. You know what would be the penalty if we were discovered trying to send information to the Continental army, and yet we are willing to take all the risks, if thereby we can aid our friends."

"That you can, lad, if it so be what you have heard is true. Will you be able to leave town at once?"

"Within an hour."

"Very well, you cannot go too soon. If you travel six miles on the Delaware Road I'll answer for it that you meet some of our friends who will conduct you to those whom you wish to see. Don't tell your story to any officer lower in rank than a colonel, and do not be surprised if those whom you meet give rough usage at first. Hold both your tongue and your temper until the purpose has been accomplished, and then I warrant you will be well thanked for the service."

"We will go at once," Jacob said decidedly. "Is there anything we can do for you, friend?"

"What I most want is to get my neck and wrists out of this contrivance, and that is exactly what you can't help me in the doing. I suppose I should be thankful for being let off so lightly."

"Indeed you should!" Enoch replied quickly. "The Britishers have been flogging the market-stoppers, and that punishment is truly terrible."

"I have seen those who had a taste of it," the prisoner said grimly, "and have no desire to take a dose. But do not stand here talking with me when you have valuable information to give our friends. When you meet with soldiers of our army, say that Ezra Grimshaw sent you to speak with Colonel Powers."

"Is your name Grimshaw?" Enoch asked.

"Yes, lad. If you can get speech with Colonel Powers you need have no fear of rough treatment. Now set out, for time may be precious. Which of you is to do the work?"

"All," Enoch replied quickly, as if fearing that, because of the timidity he had displayed, his friends might deprive him of the opportunity to do his share.

"There is no need of but one," Grimshaw said decidedly, "and many reasons why three should not make the venture, chiefest of which is, that so many might attract the attention of the enemy's patrol, while a single boy on the road would pass unchallenged."

"It is not right one should have all the honor, while the others are deprived of their share," Enoch replied decidedly.

"Lad, is it honor for yourself or the good of the country you have most at heart?" Grimshaw asked sternly.

"I want to be known as one who did not remain idle when he was needed."

"If you really desire to do good to the cause, decide among yourselves as to who shall go, and then let the other two aid him all they can. Do not spend the time in squabbling, but set about the business without delay."

There was no opportunity for him to say more; at that moment a party of British officers entered the yard, evidently bent on amusing themselves by making sport of the prisoner, and the boys were forced to step aside.

Seth beckoned for his comrades to follow him, and not until he was on High Street did he speak. Then it was to say:

"Grimshaw was right; we must not quarrel as to who shall go, but settle the matter at once. Of course each one wants——"

"I should have the chance," Jacob said decidedly. "Either of you may have some trouble to get away; but it is not so with me. My aunt will not worry if I am absent a week; she knows I——"

"Either Enoch or I would have permission to leave home if we explained the reason for going, and, therefore, are as much entitled to the position of messenger as you," Seth interrupted.

"Then how shall it be decided?"

"We will draw lots. Here is a straw; will you hold it, Jacob?"

"Not I, for I want the chance to make my choice."

"Then I will do it," and Seth turned his back to his companions an instant, saying, as he faced them once more, "I have broken the straw into one long and two short pieces. He who draws the longest shall start at once."

Jacob insisted on making his choice first, arguing that such advantage should be his because he was the eldest, and, after considerable study, drew one of the fragments from Seth's hand.

It was so short that he knew the position of messenger was not for him, and stepped back with an expression of bitter disappointment on his face.

Enoch was no more successful, and Seth said triumphantly, as he held up the piece remaining in in his hand:

"It is for me! If you two will tell mother where I've gone I'll start at once."

"That part of the work shall be done properly," Jacob replied, all traces of ill-humor vanishing from his face. "If she allows it, I'll take your place till you get back."

"Mother will be glad to have you there. Try to hear all the officers talk about; but do not let it appear that you are listening."

"Don't fear for me. Shall we walk a mile or so with you?"

"It would do no good, and might not be safe. Tell mother I shall be back to-night, or early to-morrow morning, for I don't intend to let the grass grow under my feet."

"Keep out of the Britishers' way, or we may

have to go down to the town-house in order to see you again," Enoch said with a furtive hand-clasp as the three separated, two to go to Drinker's Alley, and the third to render to the cause what service was in his power.

CHAPTER II.

UNDER ARREST.

THERE was no doubt in Seth's mind but that it would be comparatively easy to perform the mission which he had taken upon himself.

He believed the only difficulty to overcome would be that of finding Colonel Powers, or an officer equal or superior to him in rank.

So far as making an excursion on the Delaware Road was concerned, it seemed an exceedingly simple matter, and Seth thought, as he set off at his best pace, that it was possible a fellow could aid the cause very materially without being called upon to endure much suffering, or to perform any severe work.

He met several of the country people coming into the city with poultry, eggs or butter, they being quick to take advantage of the fact that the road had been lately cleared of market-stoppers by the raid which resulted in making of Ezra Grimshaw a prisoner.

During the first half-hour of his journey he fancied that every person he met looked at him scrutinizingly, as if suspicious because he had left the city; but this sensation soon wore away as the

time passed and no one molested him, after which he really began to enjoy this impromptu excursion.

When an hour had passed, during which time Seth walked at his best pace, he decided he was at least four miles from the town, and the likelihood of being stopped by the British patrol no longer seemed probable.

Grimshaw had told him if he traveled six miles in this direction he would meet with detachments of Americans, and he believed he was now in that portion of the country where his mission should be successfully ended.

There had not come into his mind the possibility that he could by any chance be considered a suspicious character by those whom he would aid, and he thought that it had been an excess of precaution to send word regarding the journey to his mother.

"I shall be back by the time Jacob and Enoch have had a chance to tell the story," he muttered, "and it would have been as well if I hadn't allowed mother an opportunity to worry about me. General Howe must have little fear of those whom he calls rebels if he allows people to leave the city as readily as I have done."

Twenty minutes later he was made glad by the sight of half a dozen horsemen on the road in advance of him, for he felt positive they were none other than those whom he wished to meet.

Now it was no longer necessary he should press forward rapidly in order to accomplish his purpose,

for the mounted party came toward him at full speed.

"Where are you from, lad?" the leader asked as he drew rein directly in front of Seth.

"From the town," the young patriot replied readily, positive of receiving a friendly greeting as soon as his errand was made known. "I want to see Colonel Powers. Ezra Grimshaw told me I would find him hereabouts."

"Where did you see Grimshaw?" the horseman asked more sternly than Seth thought necessary.

"On the pillory. He was captured by the British-ers somewhere out——"

"Yes, we know all about that," the man interrupted, "but Grimshaw would never have told anybody where we might be found."

"But he did," Seth replied stoutly, "and it was under his advice that I came out here to see Colonel Powers."

It seemed strange that this statement should be questioned, yet the young messenger was quite certain from the expression on the faces of the horsemen that such was the case, and as they glanced at each other suspiciously and incredulously, he hastened to add:

"I have information which should be made known to the leaders of the Continental army, and Grimshaw told me to come here and repeat it to Colonel Powers."

"You have information?" the leader asked sharply. "And who may you be, sir?"

"Seth Graydon."

"Are you the son of that widow Graydon who keeps the boarding-house for English officers?"

"Yes," Seth replied without hesitation. "I heard——"

"How did you get speech with Grimshaw if he was on the pillory?" one of the men asked abruptly.

"I, with two friends, was near the town-house when those who made the capture brought him in, and by waiting until the curious ones had gone away it was not difficult to speak with him privately."

"Was he flogged?" the leader asked.

"No, sir."

"Nor treated more severely than being put on the pillory?"

"No, sir."

"And yet he told where we could be found?"

"Yes, because he was eager one of us should have speech with Colonel Powers."

"If the British officers who board with your mother have sent you on this errand they will be disappointed at the result of their scheme. The Tories of Philadelphia are not giving out valuable information to those who are faithful to the cause."

The leader spoke so sternly that for the first time since he parted with his comrades Seth began to feel uncomfortable in mind.

"But I am not a Tory!" he cried stoutly.

"Then you have not taken due advantage of your surroundings," the officer said with a laugh. "A

great hulking lad like you would be in the Continental army if he had any love for the cause, instead of playing the spy for the sake of British gold."

"But I am not playing the spy," and now Seth began to grow angry. "I came out here to render you a service, at the risk of being flogged if it is known that I left the city for such a purpose. I intend to enlist as soon as the Britishers have left Philadelphia."

"Indeed? Is that true, my lad? You will enlist when we are on the winning side, and not before, eh?"

"Can I see Colonel Powers?" Seth asked hotly. "Or will you take me to some one equal in rank with him?"

"You shall have an opportunity of seeing an officer in the Continental army, don't fear as to that; but if you count on going back to Philadelphia in time to give valuable information to the Britishers, you are mistaken. They will look for their spy quite a spell before seeing him."

"I tell you I am not a spy!" Seth interrupted.

"That you shall have an opportunity to prove. Have you any weapons?"

"Indeed I haven't."

"Look him over, Hubbard, and make certain he isn't telling more lies," the leader said to one of his followers, and the man dismounted at once, searching Seth's person so roughly that the boy forgot Grimshaw's warning to control his temper.

"You shall be made sorry for this!" he cried hotly. "You shall learn——"

A blow on the side of the head caused him to reel, and he would have fallen but that he staggered against one of the horses.

"Howe's Tory brood grow bold, thinking their master as powerful as he would make it seem," the leader said with a laugh, and added in a threatening tone to Seth, "March ahead of us, young man! Don't make the mistake of thinking you can give us the slip! Your desire to see an officer in the Continental army shall speedily be gratified."

"If this is the way you treat those who would do you a service, it is little wonder you fail to receive much valuable information!" the boy cried angrily.

"Keep your tongue between your teeth, and march on! Any further insolence, and you shall be made to understand that Howe is not the only person who can order floggings administered. Forward, men, and shoot the Tory spawn if he makes any attempt to escape."

Seth recognized the fact that it would be worse than useless to resist, and obeyed sullenly.

At that moment he was very nearly a Tory at heart, for such treatment seemed brutal in the extreme after he had ventured so much in the hope of being of service to his country.

"If this is the way those who would aid the cause are received I don't wonder General Washington finds it difficult to raise recruits," Seth said to himself. "When I have told Jacob

and Enoch of my reception by those whom we called friends there will be three who won't enlist as was intended."

It seemed to the boy as if there was no excuse for his thus being made a prisoner, and he felt only bitterness toward those who, an hour previous, he would have been proud to assist.

The troopers kept him moving at his best pace, urging him in front of the horses with their naked swords, hesitating not to prick him roughly now and then when he lagged, until two miles or more had been traversed, when they arrived at what was little more than a trail through the woods, leading from the main road, and here he was ordered to wheel to the right.

Just for an instant he was tempted to make one effort at escaping; but, fortunately, he realized the futility of such a move, and went swiftly up the path as he had been commanded.

Twenty minutes later, when he was nearly breathless owing to the rapid march, the party had arrived at what was evidently a rendezvous for the American patrols.

It was an open space in the midst of dense woods, and here a dozen or more horses were tethered to the trees, while as many men were lounging about in a most indolent fashion.

"What have you got there, Jordan?" one of the idlers cried, and the leader replied with a coarse laugh:

"A young Tory who is trying to win his spurs in a most bungling fashion."

"From the town?"

"He is the son of the woman who runs a boarding-house for British officers, and claims to have been sent by Grimshaw."

"Where is Grimshaw?"

"On the pillory, so the boy says. He was captured this morning by some of the Queen's Rangers."

"He is like to have a sore back when he shows up here again."

"We will send them one in return," Captain Jordan replied, pointing to Seth. "It won't be a bad idea to show Howe that we can swing the whip as well as his redcoats, and if ever a cub deserved a flogging it is this one."

"We've got nothing else to do, so let's try our hand on him," some one cried, and Seth looked around terrified.

If these men decided to treat him as a Tory he would be powerless against them, and there seemed little chance he could convince the troopers of the truth of his statement.

Two of the soldiers began cutting birchen switches, as if believing the suggestion would be carried into effect immediately, and Seth's face grew very white.

"We'll dress him down to your liking captain, if you give the word," one of the men who had begun the preparations for the punishment cried, as

"YOU SEEM TO BE AFRAID A FELLOW WILL GET AWAY," SETH SAID BITTERLY.

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if eager to be at the work. "It's time we commenced to show the Britishers that the floggings are not to be all on one side."

Captain Jordan, although the first to make such a suggestion, was not prepared to give the order, knowing full well that he would be exceeding his authority should he do so, and replied with a laugh:

"We shan't lose anything by waiting, so there's no need of being in a hurry. Look out for the prisoner, Hubbard, and see to it that he don't escape you."

The trooper thus commanded seized Seth roughly by the shoulder, and half-dragging, half-leading him to a tree on one side of the clearing, proceeded to fetter the boy by tying him securely.

"You seem to be afraid a fellow will get away," Seth said bitterly. "Fifteen or twenty men should be enough to guard one boy."

"Very likely they are, lad; but we don't intend to give ourselves any more trouble than is necessary. You will stay here, I reckon, and we shan't be put to the bother of watching you."

There was something in the man's tone which caused Seth to believe he might be made a friend.

By this time he realized it was worse than useless for him to display temper, and that it might yet be possible to escape the threatened punishment. Therefore he said in a conciliatory tone:

"Does it seem so strange to you, my wish to be of benefit to the cause, that you cannot believe my

story sufficiently to allow me an interview with Colonel Powers?"

"I don't see where the harm would be in that, lad; but it isn't for me to say. Captain Jordan is in command of this squad."

"But hark you, Mr. Hubbard. I have told only the truth. If my mother, a poor widow woman, is forced to take English officers as boarders, does that make of me a Tory?"

"Well, lad, I can't rightly say it does, though after the junketin's you people have had in Philadelphia this winter, I allow all hands are more or less afflicted with that disease."

"But I am not. The story I told about meeting Grimshaw is true. One of my companions is the son of Chris Ludwick, whom likely you know; we drew lots to see who should come here, and I was pleased because the choice fell on me. Do you think it right that I should be flogged and sent back before your officers have had time to find out whether I am telling the truth or a lie?"

"No, lad, I don't, for I allow you have had plenty of chances to hear that which would be valuable to our side; but whether you would tell it or not is another matter."

"Why shouldn't I want to tell it? Are the soldiers of the Continental army the only men in the country who love the cause?"

"Those who love the cause should be in the army when men are needed as now."

"Before General Howe took possession of Phila-

delphia I was too young to be received as a soldier —am too young now; but shall make the attempt to enter as soon as possible."

"Would you be willing to enlist to-day?"

"Not until I have talked with my mother. She depends upon me for assistance, and it isn't right I should leave home without her permission. But that has nothing to do with the story I came to tell. I swear to you I have heard that which should be known to your officers. I told it to Grimshaw, and he insisted I should not repeat it to any one of lower rank than a colonel."

"Then it must be mighty important information."

"So it is; yet without giving me an opportunity to tell it I am to be kept here and flogged."

"That is Captain Jordan's affair," Hubbard replied; but Seth understood that his words had had some effect upon the man, and he continued yet more earnestly:

"There can be no harm in taking me to Colonel Powers, for after that has been done you will still have the opportunity to give me a flogging. When I have repeated that which I came to say I shall yet be a prisoner."

Hubbard made no reply to this, but walked quickly away to where Jordan was talking with a group of the men, and Seth began to hope he could yet accomplish his purpose, although he was far from feeling comfortable in mind as to what might be the final result of his attempt to aid the cause.

During the next half-hour no one came sufficiently near the prisoner to admit of his entering into another conversation.

The men were discussing some matter very earnestly, and Seth believed he himself was the subject.

Then the scene was changed.

Ten or twelve horsemen rode into the open, and by their uniforms Seth understood that officers of a higher rank than Captain Jordan had arrived.

The newcomers did not dismount, but received the captain's report while in the saddle, and then, to the prisoner's great delight, rode directly toward him.

"What is your name?" the eldest member of the party asked.

"Seth Graydon."

"Is it true that your mother has as boarders many officers of the British army?"

"Yes, sir. There are seven from the Forty-second Highlanders, five of the Royal Irish regiment, and Lord Cosmo Gordon."

"And you overheard a conversation at your mother's house which you believed would be of value to us?"

"Yes, sir," and Seth told in detail of his conversation with Ezra Grimshaw, concluding by asking, "Are you Colonel Powers?"

"I am, my lad, and see no reason for doubting your good intentions. You have been roughly treated, it is true; but it has not been serious, and you must realize that the soldiers are suspicious

because of the many attempts at treachery this spring. You say you told Grimshaw what you had heard? Did he insist you should repeat it to me in private?"

"No, sir. I was simply to tell no one of lower rank."

"Then what have you to say?"

Seth detailed the conversation he had heard in his mother's house, and Colonel Powers questioned him closely regarding the comments which had been made by the British officers at the time the subject was under discussion.

When he had answered these questions to the best of his ability, the colonel beckoned for Captain Jordan, and said harshly:

"I wonder, captain, that you and your troops should be so afraid of one boy as to bind him in such a manner. He has brought most valuable information, and should be richly rewarded for his services, instead of being trussed up in this fashion."

The captain looked confused as he released Seth, and while doing so whispered in the boy's ear:

"I am sorry, lad, for what has happened, and that is all any man can say."

However much ill-will Seth may have felt toward his captor just at that moment, he had no desire to show it.

The words of commendation spoken by Colonel Powers were sufficient reward for all he had undergone during his time of arrest, and he felt almost friendly-disposed, even toward those of the troopers

who had so eagerly begun to prepare the switches for his back.

"You shall have an escort as far toward the town as is consistent with your safety and ours," the colonel said when Seth was freed from the ropes. "I thank you for your service, and shall, perhaps, at some time be able to reward you better. When you decide to enlist, come to me."

Then the colonel, beckoning to his staff, rode away with the air of one who has an important duty to execute, and Captain Jordan held out his hand to his late prisoner.

"Forgive me, lad, and say you bear me no ill-will."

"That I can readily do, now my message has been delivered," Seth replied promptly, and the troopers gathered around, each as eager to show his friendliness as he previously had been to inflict punishment.

A horse was brought up, and the captain, now the most friendly of soldiers, said to Seth:

"We'll escort you as far as the creek; further than that is hardly safe. You can easily reach home before dark, for the ride will not be a long one."

"I can walk as well as not, if you have other work to do," Seth replied.

"We are stationed on the road here to stop the country people from carrying in produce, and by giving you a lift shall only be continuing our duties."

Seth mounted; the captain rode by his side; half a dozen men came into line in the rear, and the little party started at a sharp trot, which, owing to his lack of skill as a horseman, effectually prevented Seth from joining in the conversation the captain endeavored to carry on.

In half an hour or less the squad had arrived at the bank of the creek, and Seth dismounted.

"The next time you come this way I'll try to treat you in a better fashion, lad," Captain Jordan said, and Seth replied as the party rode away:

"I don't doubt that; but the next time I come it will be with more caution, fearing lest I meet with those who will be quicker to give me the Tory's portion than were you."

Then he set out at a rapid pace, congratulating himself his troubles were over, and that he would be at home before any of the inmates of his mother's house should question his prolonged absence.

He believed his mission had been accomplished; that he had rendered no slight service to the cause, and that there was no longer any danger to be apprehended.

He whistled as he walked, giving but little heed to what might be before or behind him, until, within less than five minutes from the time he had parted with the American horsemen, he was confronted by a squad of the Queen's Rangers, commanded by a lieutenant.

"Take him up in front of you," the officer said to the trooper nearest him. "We can't be delayed by forcing him to march on foot."

"What are you to do with me?" Seth cried in surprise, for this command was the first word which had been spoken by either party.

"That remains to be seen," the officer replied curtly.

"But there is no reason for arresting me," Seth continued. "I am the son of Mrs. Graydon, who keeps the boarding-house in Drinker's Alley."

"Ah! Indeed?"

"Certainly I am, and any of the officers who live there can vouch for me."

"Those who vouch for you would be indiscreet," the lieutenant said sharply. "You are under arrest, and it is possible may persuade the commander that Mrs. Graydon's son does not hold communication with the rebels; but any protestations on your part would be useless, so far as we are concerned, for we saw you escorted by a squad of rebel horsemen. Mount in front of the trooper and make no parley. General Howe has a short shrift for spies, and we shall not spend our time here convincing you that your treason has been discovered."

Seth was almost helpless through fear.

Since the Rangers had seen him riding in company with Continental troopers there was little question but that he would be considered a spy, and he knew what would probably be the punishment.

CHAPTER III.

IN SORE DISTRESS.

SETH was literally overwhelmed by the misfortune which had come upon him.

After Colonel Powers interposed to prevent the threatened whipping by the American soldiers, he believed his troubles were over, and that he might be made prisoner by the British was a possibility he never contemplated.

It was not necessary any one should explain to him how dangerous was his situation.

The lieutenant and his men had seen him escorted by a body of "rebel" troops in such a manner as to show they were friends, and then he had come directly toward the city, all of which would be sufficient to prove him a spy in these times, when an accusation was almost equivalent to a verdict of guilty.

And poor Seth was well aware what punishment was dealt out to spies. He had seen one man hanged for such an offense, and remained in the house on two other occasions lest he should inadvertently witness some portion of other horrible spectacles.

He knew the evidence against him was sufficient for conviction, and understood that, once sentence

had been passed, there was little or no hope for mercy.

It is not strange, nor was it any proof of cowardice, that he was so overcome by the knowledge of his position as to be thoroughly unnerved; and when, on arriving at the outskirts of the town, the lieutenant ordered him to dismount and walk, he was able to do so only after being assisted by a soldier on either side.

Like one in a dream he understood, as they went toward the prison, that all the idlers on the streets followed, hooting and yelling, and once he fancied some person called him by name, but it was as if he could not raise his head to look around.

The only facts he fully realized were that he stood face to face with a shameful death, and that by the rules of war he fully deserved it.

He had been so proud when it was decided by lot that he should carry the information to the Continental army, and believed himself so brave! Now, however, he understood that he was acting as a coward would act, and tried again and again to appear more courageous.

"If my death was to be of great benefit to the cause, it would not seem so hard," he repeated to himself more than once during that disgraceful journey through the streets, while he was being jeered at, as many American soldiers had been, when he was among the rabble, although not of them.

If he was wearing a uniform of buff and blue, he

knew that among those who saw him would be many sympathizers; but in civilian's garb he could not be distinguished from some vile criminal, and there would be no glory in what he was called upon to suffer.

The Rangers led him past the town-house, and in the yard, still standing on the pillory, he saw Ezra Grimshaw.

The soldier must have recognized the boy as he passed, but yet he gave no token of recognition, and so sore was Seth's distress that he failed to understand how much more desperate would be his strait if the "market-stopper" had greeted him as a friend.

When the jail-door closed behind him with a sullen clang it sounded in the boy's ears like a knell of doom, and he firmly believed that when he next passed through the portal it would be on his way to the scaffold.

After being heavily ironed he was thrust into a cell so small that he could hardly have stood upright even though the fetters were removed, and there left to the misery of his own thoughts.

During the march through the city he had not raised his head, save while passing the pillory, therefore was ignorant of the fact that Jacob and Enoch had followed him as closely as the soldiers would permit, hoping an opportunity to whisper a cheering word in his ear might present itself.

Even though Seth had not been so bowed down by grief, it is hardly probable his friends would have

been allowed to communicate with him; but he might have been cheered by their glances, knowing he was not alone among enemies.

Yet even this poor consolation was denied him, and when the door of the jail finally hid him from view, Enoch and Jacob stood silent and motionless in front of the sinister-looking building, gazing with grief and dismay at each other.

"How *do* you suppose they caught him?" Enoch asked after a long time of silence, during which Jacob had led him out on to High Street lest their sorrow should be observed by some of the enemy, and they arrested on the charge of having aided the alleged spy.

"We shall most likely hear the story the Rangers tell, for it will soon be known around town, although we shan't be able to say whether it's the truth."

"Do you suppose he found any officer of our army?"

"I think he must have done so. It isn't reasonable to suppose they made him a prisoner simply because he walked out into the country. Besides, I heard one of the Rangers tell a friend that Seth was a spy. Perhaps they captured him just as he was leaving the Continental camp."

"Do you think they will hang him?" and Enoch's voice trembled as he asked the question.

"Yes, if it is proven he's a spy, and the Britishers who made the capture will take good care their stories are strong enough to do that."

"But, Jacob, must we remain quiet while they are

killing poor Seth?" and now the big tears were rolling down Enoch's cheeks.

"We shall be forced to, if the matter goes as far as that. We must do what we can before he is put on trial."

"But, what *can* we do? We have no friends among the Britishers, and even though we had it isn't likely we could prevent General Howe from doing as he pleases!"

"Then you believe we can do nothing?" Jacob said almost despairingly.

"It doesn't seem possible, although I would suffer anything, except death itself, to help him. Oh, Jacob!" Enoch cried as a sudden thought came into his mind. "We must tell his mother where he is, and that will be terrible!"

Jacob made no reply. He believed it unmanly to cry, and the tears were so near his eyelids that he dared not speak lest they should flow as copiously as Enoch's.

The two were walking up High Street, unconscious of the direction in which they were going, when Jacob gave vent to an exclamation of mingled surprise and joy as he cried:

"What a stupid I have been not to think of him! He would be a very pleasant gentleman if he wasn't a Britisher!"

"Whom do you mean?" and Enoch looked around in perplexity.

"There! On the other side of the street, coming this way!"

"I don't see any one except Lord Cosmo Gordon, who lives at Seth's home."

"And that is the very man who will help us if it is possible for him to do anything."

"Do you mean that a Britisher would speak a good word for Seth after it is known he has been carrying information to the Continental army?"

"I'm not so certain about that; but I feel positive if any of the enemy would do a good turn, that one is Lord Gordon. Have you ever seen a more pleasant gentleman?"

"He has always been very kind; but then he did not know we were willing to work against his king."

"Of course he knew it! How many times has he called us young rebels, and declared that when we were ripe for the army he would take good care we did not get the chance to enlist?"

"He was only in sport, and would talk differently if he knew what we have done."

"It can do no harm to try. Seth is likely to be hanged as a spy, and no worse punishment can be given him. I am going to tell Lord Gordon the story. Will you come?"

Enoch hesitated just an instant as the thought came to his mind that by acknowledging their share in what had been done they might be making great trouble for themselves, and then, his better nature asserting itself, he replied:

"I will follow you to do anything that might by chance help poor Seth."

Jacob had hardly waited for him to speak. Lord Gordon was already opposite, walking rapidly past, and unless they overtook him at once he must soon be so far away that an undignified chase would be necessary.

Master Ludwick crossed the street at a run, Enoch following closely behind, and a few seconds later, to his great surprise, Lord Gordon was brought to a standstill as Jacob halted directly in front of him.

"Ah! here are two of my young rebels! Where is the third? I thought you were an inseparable trio."

"I don't know what you mean by that, sir; but we're in most terrible trouble, and you have always been so kind, even though you are a—I mean, you've been so kind that I thought—I mean, I was in hopes you could—you would be willing to——"

"I can well understand that you are now having trouble to talk plainly," Lord Gordon said with a smile. "I gather from the beginning of your incoherent remarks that you have come to me for assistance. The rebels have at last turned to the British for relief!"

"But this is something terrible!" Jacob exclaimed vehemently, and then, after trying unsuccessfully to think of the proper words, he cried, "Seth is going to be hanged!"

"Hanged! You rebels don't go to the gallows so young; in fact evince a decided aversion to anything of the kind. Now take plenty of time, and try to tell me what disturbs you so seriously," Lord

Gordon said with a hearty laugh. "I had an engagement at the tavern; but am willing to break it if I can do anything to make good subjects for his majesty of you three boys."

"But this is no laughing matter, sir," Jacob cried, despairing of being able to make the Englishman understand how desperate was the situation. "Seth Graydon has been arrested as a spy, and is in prison at this instant!"

"What?" and now the smile faded from Lord Gordon's face. "Do you mean our Seth—your comrade?"

"Indeed I do, sir!"

"But it is incredible! He hasn't been out of the city, and although I suppose he has hopes of some day entering the American army, as all you young rebels have, he is not in a position where he could play the spy, however much he may be willing to do so."

Jacob looked confused; he was not certain but that he might be injuring his friend's cause by confessing the truth, and yet at the some time it was not reasonable to suppose Lord Gordon could render any assistance unless he understood the entire affair.

"Tell his lordship the whole story," Enoch said in a low tone. "I am certain he would not use it against any of us."

"Yes, my lad, it will be better to tell me the truth. I do not promise to aid you; but I will treat as confidential anything you may say."

The officer's tone was so kindly that Jacob hesitated no longer. He told all he knew regarding the matter, making no attempt to conceal the fact that Seth had listened to the conversation of the guests in his mother's house, and when he concluded Lord Gordon stood silent, like one who is trying to settle some vexed question.

Then he said, as if to himself:

"This will be sad news for his mother, and she is a worthy woman!"

"It will just about kill her!" Enoch cried.

"Did she know he was going to meet the rebels?" and now the officer spoke sternly.

"Indeed she didn't, sir. Enoch and I told her he had gone out on the Delaware Road; but made it appear that we were ignorant as to why he went."

"Why should you not have told the truth?"

"We were afraid she might think it her duty to tell you, because what he learned had been gained—well, perhaps it wouldn't have been just right to take such an advantage except in a case like this, where no fellow could sit still knowing his friends might be running into a trap."

"Don't you think Mrs. Graydon ever carried any information to the American camp?"

"I am sure she never did—not since General Howe has been in this city," Enoch replied promptly.

"Why are you so positive?"

"I've heard her say that if we are willing to take

your money, we should at least be true to you for the time being."

"It is quite evident you boys are not of the same opinion."

"We expect to go into the army very soon, and it is our duty to do all we can to aid the cause," Jacob said stoutly.

"And you know, while you are trying to aid the cause, what is to be expected if you are captured?"

Jacob understood that he was not aiding his friend by speaking boldly, and Lord Gordon had so clearly the best of him in the matter that he was wholly at loss for a reply.

"We never believed that by going to where Seth would meet the Continentals anything more could come of it than a flogging, and that seemed terrible enough," Enoch cried. "Seth had no idea he might be arrested as a spy!"

"We won't quibble about the fine points of the case, my lad. It is a fact that he has voluntarily placed himself in a position where he certainly appears as if he had been acting the spy, and there is, perhaps, not an officer in his majesty's army, except myself, who would believe that this is his first wrongdoing."

Jacob was on the point of saying that there could be nothing wrong in aiding one's country, but, fortunately for Seth, he realized in time that Lord Gordon considered the Americans rebels, rather than patriots, and to him anything of the kind would not seem praiseworthy.

"Can't you help him, sir?" Enoch asked imploringly, understanding that nothing could be gained by discussing the matter.

"I am afraid my influence is not sufficient to effect anything while the charge is so serious. There is but one punishment for spies, and it is seldom crimes of that kind are pardoned."

"Then must poor Seth be hanged?"

"I shall do what I can to help him, my lad, of that you may be certain. Possibly we may be able to have a lighter charge brought against him, and to that end I will work. His mother must know he is in prison, but need not be told he is there as a spy. Disagreeable though the task will be, I take it upon myself to acquaint her with some of the reasons for his absence, and also promise to do all in my power to save his life."

"If General Howe will let him off with a flogging, Jacob and I are willing to come up for our share of the punishment as the price of setting Seth free."

"That is a generous offer, Enoch, whether it be a fair one or not. Meet me at the City Tavern tomorrow forenoon at ten o'clock, and I will then let you know what can be done."

Both the boys would have thanked the kindly Englishman for the interest he displayed in their comrade, but that he checked their grateful words by saying hurriedly:

"It is exceedingly bad taste to have a scene on the street, boys, therefore we will say no more

about it to-day. Perhaps when I see you to-morrow there will be no occasion to thank me, for I really have but little influence with General Howe. Don't show yourself to Mrs. Graydon to-night, for she would soon learn the sad news from the expression on your faces, and, unless it is absolutely necessary, I do not propose that the worthy lady shall know in what sore distress her son is, through his own recklessness."

Then Lord Gordon walked rapidly away, allowing the boys no time to make a reply, and although he had not given them very much encouragement, both felt decidedly relieved because of the interview.

"If he can't help Seth there isn't a Britisher in this city who can," Jacob said with emphasis. "He's the only one I know of who'd even take the trouble to talk with a couple of boys."

"But what are we to do now? I don't feel as if I could go home while poor Seth is in prison, and most likely thinking every minute of the scaffold."

"We can't do him any good by walking around the streets, and I don't want to go out to Germantown, because I might not be able to get back in time to meet Lord Gordon. Suppose I sleep at your mother's house to-night?"

"I'll be glad to have you, and she will make no question. Are we to tell her?"

"I think we shall be obliged to. It may be we can do something to help Seth, and she must know why you are absent from the house, in case it so happens we want to be away."

If Enoch had feared his mother would reproach him for having taken even a passive part in what might lead to Seth's death, he was mistaken. She spoke only of her sympathy for Mrs. Graydon, and the hope that Lord Gordon would aid the unfortunate boy in some way.

"If I was in Seth's place, mother, should you blame me for having tried to aid the cause?"

"No, my son. You are old enough to know your own mind, and should be at liberty to do that which you think right."

"Then you would make no question if I wanted to enlist?"

"That is for you to decide, my boy. Your mother's heart would be very near breaking if you were killed; but her sorrow could be no greater than is borne uncomplainingly by many mothers in this country where brave men are struggling for freedom."

Never had Enoch appreciated his mother's love as he did at this moment, and when he and Jacob bade her good-night both boys kissed her with unusual tenderness.

Fully an hour before the time appointed Jacob and Enoch were at the rendezvous waiting for Lord Gordon.

Many times that morning had they heard comments made upon Seth's arrest, and the opinion of all was to the effect that he would suffer the fate of a spy, whether he was really guilty or not.

"The appearances are against him," a gentleman

friend of Enoch's mother said when the story had been told him in the hope he might aid the prisoner in some way. "Those who made the capture say they saw him escorted to the bank of the creek by a squad of Continental troopers, and that he appeared to be on the most friendly terms with them. That is sufficient to prove him a spy, and I question if there is in this city a single person, with the exception of General Howe himself, who could serve him."

Both the boys heard this remark, and were no longer hopeful regarding Lord Gordon's ability to save their comrade, however much he might desire to do so."

The officer was punctual to the appointment he had made, and at once invited them into the coffee-room of the tavern, saying as he did so:

"It is not well we should stand on the street where all may see us, for it may be important that I should not appear to be on friendly terms with you."

When they were where a conversation could be conducted with some degree of privacy the boys waited for their companion to speak, but he remained silent, as if in deep thought, until Enoch asked timidly:

"Will it be possible for your lordship to help poor Seth?"

"I am not certain, my lad, although I hope so. The case is far more serious than I deemed possible yesterday. I believe the story you told; but you

could not persuade others it is true, and I have no doubt but that he will be found guilty."

"Does his mother know?" Enoch whispered.

"I thought it best to tell her at least a portion of the story, for she would have heard it from the gossips before this time. I have not concealed from her the fact that he is in a most serious position; but at the same time have allowed the good woman to believe I could effect his release."

"And now you do not think that will be possible?"

Instead of replying to this question Lord Gordon asked suddenly:

"How far would you two boys go in trying to release your comrade?"

"We are ready to take any chances," Jacob replied firmly.

"Does that mean you would imperil your lives in the effort to save his?"

The boys looked at each other in something very like alarm, for Lord Gordon's tone was exceedingly grave, and then Enoch replied in a voice which trembled despite all his efforts to render it steady:

"I am willing and ready to do anything, no matter what, to help Seth."

"So am I," Jacob added emphatically.

While one might have counted twenty Lord Gordon remained silent, looking like a man who is uncertain as to what he ought to do, and then he said quietly:

"Then meet me opposite the town-house at half

an hour before midnight. It is only by desperate measures that his life can be saved, and I am ready to aid you in so far as I can without dishonor. It will not be well for us to be seen together, neither are you to visit Mrs. Graydon. Be at the rendezvous promptly, and Seth shall be free by sunrise, or there will no longer remain any hope of aiding him."

Without giving them an opportunity to question him, Lord Gordon walked out of the building, leaving them gazing questioningly into each other's eyes.

CHAPTER IV.

A BOLD SCHEME.

THE boys were so thoroughly surprised by Lord Gordon's making an appointment with them as hardly to be conscious of what they did immediately after he left the room.

They sat motionless as if in bewilderment, each fancying he had an inkling of his lordship's intentions, and not daring to believe that which was in his mind.

Both must have remained in this condition of stupefaction many moments, for finally one of the attendants came up, tapped Jacob more energetically than politely on the shoulder, and intimated that if he did not wish to be served with anything he could spend his time quite as profitably, so far as the management of the tavern was concerned, in some other place.

Master Ludwick, understanding that he had the right to be in the hostelry, because of having been introduced by one of the landlord's best patrons, and angry at being treated as if he was not a desirable guest, said sharply :

"We are here because Lord Gordon invited us to

enter with him, and we shall stay until it seems best to go."

The servant muttered something which was probably intended as an apology, and made no further attempt to drive the boys from the coffee-room; but Enoch did not feel altogether at ease after this incident.

"Let us go, Jacob," he whispered. "As the servant said, this is no place for us, and, besides, we cannot be as private here as I would like while speaking of Lord Gordon's intentions."

"I should have gone before but for that impudent fellow, and now we have stayed so long that it cannot be said we ran away because of his words, I am ready. Where shall we go?"

"Anywhere, so we can be alone."

"To your house?"

"No. If I do not mistake Lord Gordon, there is serious work before us this night, and I would rather not be where mother could question me."

"Why?"

"Because I should betray that which is in my mind when she first began to talk, and if I am correct in putting a meaning on his lordship's words, it is better that no one save ourselves knows what is to be done, lest by the knowing they could be considered as in some way guilty of our acts."

By this time the boys were on the sidewalk in the midst of a group of idle officers and civilians who were commenting upon the news of the day, and the major of the Forty-second Highlanders, who was

well known to both Jacob and Enoch because of the fact that he boarded at Seth's home, was speaking sufficiently loud for them to hear his remark as they passed.

"According to the report of the lieutenant of the Rangers, there can be no question but that the little rascal has been in communication with the American forces for a long while, and it is not difficult now to understand how information of our movements reached the rebel officers. Among ourselves at the boarding-house we have talked freely, little thinking a boy, hardly more than fifteen years of age, was playing the spy; but his career will shortly be ended."

"When will he be court-martialed?" the major's companion asked.

"To-morrow afternoon, and probably hanged on the following morning."

"Then you have no doubt as to the result?"

"There can be no doubt, my dear sir. The evidence is so conclusive against him that I see no loophole of escape. All I regret is that he has been allowed to ply his trade as spy so long and so advantageously."

"Come away, Jacob," Enoch whispered, clutching his comrade nervously by the coat-sleeve. "It is fortunate for poor Seth that all the Britishers are not as hard-hearted as the major."

"We should stay long enough to convince him he is telling that which is not true," Master Ludwick replied stoutly; but at the same time obeying the

pressure of his friend's hand by moving away from the group.

"It would be difficult to persuade him he was speaking that which is false. You remember Lord Gordon told us he was probably the only person in the British army who would believe our statement in face of the proof against poor Seth."

"Lord Gordon is a man, even though he is a Britisher."

"And I hope the time will come when I can do him as great a service as he is willing to do Seth."

Enoch gave words to this desire simply as a mode of expressing his admiration for the kindly-hearted officer who would forget a quarrel of nations to aid a widow and the fatherless. He little dreamed that before many weeks had passed he would be in a position to do Lord Gordon quite as great a service as that gentleman was evidently about to do for Seth.

The two boys continued on up High Street to Sixth, and then through Walnut to the long shed adjoining the State-house yard, where the Indians who came into town on business were accustomed to take shelter, and there they halted for a consultation, or, rather, to settle in their own minds what his lordship meant when he appointed an interview at midnight near the pillory.

"He despairs of trying to aid Seth through General Howe," Enoch said as if thinking aloud.

"And intends that we shall help him break jail," Jacob added.

"In that case the poor fellow will still be in danger of being hanged, in case the British ever catch him again."

"Very true; but he will be much better off, according to my way of thinking, with a price set upon his head by General Howe, providing he is with the American army, than if he remains here until day after to morrow, when, as the major says, he will most likely be hanged."

"Of course that is true. I was only thinking that if we succeeded if effecting his release we should not remove the danger from him, so far as the British are concerned."

"I am well satisfied if so much can be done. I wish Lord Gordon had thought it best to give us more of an idea regarding his plans, so we might make our preparations."

"But what could you do if we knew positively that he intends to help Seth escape from jail?"

"Nothing, although it seems as if we would be better able to perform the work if we made some preparations."

"Do you think it will be necessary for us to run away with him?"

"That must be as Lord Gordon says. Your mother knows exactly the condition of affairs, and will understand that we are working in Seth'sbehalf, in case you should not come home to-night. If you and I accompany him in his flight, I will trust to it that his lordship finds a way to send word to our people without making any trouble for himself.

And in case we go we shall be no worse off than a great many others in this country. Remember Judge McKean, who last year was hunted like a fox through the State, forced to move his family five times, and hide them at last in a little log hut in the woods. Knowing what he and his suffered for the cause, we should not complain however hard our lot may be."

"I am not complaining, Jacob. I stand ready to bear anything which falls to my share, if by so doing I can be of service to the cause; but it isn't possible we could ever do as much as Judge McKean, who signed the Declaration of Independence."

"We can at least do our share toward making good the statement which he signed, and as to the future, so that we get Seth out of the Britishers' clutches we won't trouble our heads. It seems to me the most important question now is, what we are to do between this and midnight. We ought not to be seen loitering around the streets."

"Suppose you go down to my home and ask mother to give us as much food as will last us twenty-four hours. We will then go out near the Carpenter mansion, where we can remain hidden in the grove until night. Such of the provisions as we do not eat during the day will suffice for Seth to take with him in his flight."

"That is a good idea, Enoch, and it will be doing something toward preparing for the night's work. Now, where think you will Seth easiest find the

American forces? Where he saw them yesterday? Or in the direction of Valley Forge?"

"I think that is a question Lord Gordon himself can best decide, for he will most probably know in which direction it would be safest for Seth to travel. Shall I wait here, or walk part of the way home with you?"

"Stay where you are. I will be back in half an hour."

Mrs. Ball must have suspected that the boys were engaged in some important work, for, like the wise woman she was, she complied with her son's request, asking not so much as a single question, and scanty though her store of provisions was, collected such an amount as would have sufficed to feed two hungry boys at least three days.

Wrapping the collection neatly in a cloth, she placed it in a small bag, saying as she did so:

"It will be easier to carry in this, with not so much chance of wasting it. Tell Enoch that his mother's prayers will follow him until he comes back to her, and say that he is to remember how eagerly she watches for his return."

"I think he'll be back before to-morrow, Mrs. Ball; but if he isn't, don't you worry. There's a certain Britisher in this city who's got a heart under his red coat, and if it happens Enoch is to remain away very long, that same Britisher will send you word."

"God bless you, boys! God bless all of you, and prosper you in your undertaking!"

There was a suspicious moisture in Jacob's eyes as he hurried through Letitia Street to where his comrade was awaiting him; but by the aid of one corner of the bag he succeeded so far in effacing the telltale sign of weakness that no one would have suspected how very near he was to breaking down entirely, simply because of the kindly words spoken by the mistress of the dancing school.

The hours passed slowly and wearily to the two boys who had nothing more to do than spend the time in waiting; but finally the moment came when, in order to keep the appointment, they must leave their retreat in the grove, and it was with a sense of decided relief that they hurried forward, although knowing that they were hastening on a perilous venture.

On arriving at that side of the town-house where stood the pillory, not a person was to be seen.

Fortunately they had met with no one, not even the patrol, during their walk down from Sixth Street, and as they stood behind the instrument of torture whereon Grimshaw had passed so many painful hours it was safe to assume that no person unfriendly to their design was aware of their whereabouts.

Five, ten minutes passed, and yet no sign of life upon the deserted street.

"Something has happened; he cannot come," Enoch whispered nervously.

"I will answer for him," Jacob replied confidently. "He isn't the kind of a man who would

back out after promising, and he knows we will wait for him even though he is two hours late."

"If any of the Britishers should see us, we would be put under arrest."

"But there is no danger of that, not while we stay here, and the night is so dark that the redcoats would be obliged to hunt around a good while before finding us. I don't think it is safe to talk, because—here comes some one! Now the question is whether it's the man we are waiting for."

In the gloom the boys could faintly see a dark form coming up the street, and with loudly beating hearts they waited until the figure was nearly opposite, when a low whistle broke the silence, and Enoch said with a long-drawn sigh of relief:

"It is him. No one else would make a signal here."

Then, without waiting for an opinion from his comrade, he stepped out in view, and the newcomer directed his steps toward the pillory.

It was Lord Gordon, and he said, as he approached:

"You have a good hiding-place here, and we'll take advantage of it, because I have a few words to say before we proceed to business." Then, stepping back behind the scaffold, he continued in a low, grave tone: "Unless I was firmly convinced that the story you told me regarding Seth's movements was true, and unless I believed you when you say this is the first time he has ever carried information to the Americans, I should not attempt to aid you.

That which I am doing may seem dishonorable to those who do not know all the facts in the case. My own conscience approves, however, and I shall do what, as an officer in the British army, I ought not to do, in order to save from a disgraceful death a boy who has been indiscreet—not guilty as a spy. But although I can thus satisfy my conscience, I could not have my actions known to the commander of the forces without laying myself open—and justly—to a charge of treason. Therefore I ask that from this moment you boys forget that I ever gave advice or assistance in the matter."

"No one shall ever hear your name from us," Jacob said when Lord Gordon paused as if for a reply.

"I shall trust you, my boy, for although I am doing no dishonorable act, as we view the matter, my honor would be at stake if you should incautiously betray my share in this affair. I think now you understand the position which I occupy, and we will say no more about it. This is the only way by which we can aid your friend. If he is here, he will be brought before the court to-morrow; conviction is absolutely certain to follow, and then comes the execution. To plead with General Howe would be not only a waste of words, but cause suspicion in case the boy should escape later. I have here an old pass, signed by the general to visit the prison, issued in blank so that it may be used by any one. I have filled in your names. You will present it boldly at the door. There will be no

question raised. You will be conducted to the prisoner's cell, and there you are to remain until a soldier opens the door, and repeats these three words: 'It is time!' Then walk out unconcernedly, all of you. If the plan which I have arranged is successful, you will see no one save the man who gives the signal. It can only fail through some officer or soldier going advertently into the corridor, in which case the prisoner will be in no worse position than before; but you will share his cell because of having attempted to effect his escape. Should this last unfortunately occur, both of you will probably be severely punished—flogged, I should say—and that is the risk which you must take if you would aid Seth. Barring the inopportune coming of some person, the scheme will go through without trouble, for the man on duty is an old follower of mine, upon whom I can depend to the death."

"Will he not be punished for allowing Seth to escape?" Enoch asked.

"That part of it I can manage. All which concerns you is to get yourself and your comrade out of prison once you have entered."

"Where shall we go in case we succeed?" Jacob asked.

"That you must decide for yourselves. My advice would be for Seth to push on toward the headquarters of the American army at full speed, and you boys return to your homes."

"But it will be known that we visited Seth, because you say our names are on this paper."

"That pass will not be seen by any one, unless it chances you are discovered, and then the soldier on duty will use it as his warrant for admitting you at such an hour."

"Why shouldn't we go with Seth?" Jacob asked, detaining Lord Gordon as he would have moved away.

"Because one boy has better chance of making his way across the country unobserved than three would have. And again, perhaps I am not willing to assist in increasing the number of the rebel forces to such an extent. However, you are at liberty to do as you choose about it. I have simply advised that he go while you remain here. Now my portion of the work is done; it remains for you to execute the plan; and I hope most sincerely you will succeed. No, we won't have any thanks, or formalities of that kind, my lad," the officer added when Enoch took him by the hand as if he would have kissed it. "I have done only that which seems right; but which to the world will seem wrong. Perhaps some time in the future, when we are no longer supposed to be enemies, you can give free words to your gratitude. Be stout-hearted; move as if you had a right to go and come as you please, and do not lose your courage in event of failure."

Lord Gordon disappeared from view immediately after he ceased speaking, and during fully a moment the two boys stood facing each other, silent and motionless.

"This won't do," Jacob said with an effort. "If

the plan proves a success, the earlier Seth is on his way the more chances he will have of reaching our forces. If it is to be a failure, why, the quicker we know it the sooner we'll be out of our suspense. Are you ready?"

"Yes," Enoch whispered; "but I am terribly frightened, Jacob."

"So long as you don't show it there's no harm done; but I am beginning to believe that you are braver when you are frightened. Will you take the pass, or shall I?"

"You keep it. I will follow; but do not think I could conduct the affair as well as you."

"Then come. Try to think of nothing but the fact that unless we succeed Seth will be hanged, and I allow that's enough to keep us well up to our work."

Swiftly, and in silence, the boys walked to the prison where their comrade was confined, and there Jacob knocked vigorously on the iron door, as if about to demand what was his right, rather than to ask for a favor.

A soldier answered the summons, and as he looked at the pass which Master Ludwick held out Enoch fancied a peculiar expression came over his face, as if he had been expecting to see that particular piece of paper.

Jacob stepped over the threshold without waiting for an invitation, and his comrade followed.

The soldier, who had not spoken, led the way in silence down the corridor, unlocked a heavily barred

door cautiously, as if it was his desire to avoid making a noise, and motioned for the boys to enter.

It was so dark in the small cell that the visitors could not distinguish any object.

"Seth!" Jacob whispered. "Where are you, Seth?"

A glad cry of surprise came from out the darkness; a clanking of chains was heard, and the despairing prisoner cried hysterically:

"Oh, Jacob! Jacob! Is it you?"

"It is indeed, Seth, and Enoch is with me," Master Ludwick said in a whisper. "You had best not talk loud, for there is no reason why any one save the soldier on duty should know we are here."

"But how did you get in?"

"Never mind that part of it, Seth. At least not until we are outside."

"Outside! What do you mean?"

"Through a friend, whose name must not be spoken, there is a chance you may escape, and it is necessary we are ready to act instantly the signal is given."

"But I don't understand——"

"Don't try. Simply know that perhaps you will walk out of here this night free, and keep your mind steadily on the fact that if we succeed you must be precious near the American forces by daylight."

"But how is he to walk with those chains on him?" Enoch whispered. "That is something we never thought of, and it will be impossible for him to go on to the street fettered as he is."

"Now I begin to understand!" Seth exclaimed. "A soldier came in here half an hour ago, and after looking over these irons as if to make sure they were fastened, left the key in the lock of the fetters which are around my wrists. Do you suppose he intended to do so?"

"That is exactly the idea, and we can thank—our friend for having thought of it. Let me see if we can get them off in the darkness."

Aided by Seth's directions Jacob had little difficulty in removing the fetters, and he whispered as he handed the leg-irons to Enoch:

"Put these under your coat."

"Why?"

"It may be of service to him who has assisted us, in case the fetters disappear as if Seth wore them out of the prison. We will throw them away once we are free, if indeed we ever are."

At this instant the cell-door was opened softly, and the boys heard a hoarse whisper:

"It is time!"

"That is the signal!" Jacob said nervously. "Now, Seth, follow close at my heels. Don't speak to any one, nor show signs of fear. This is the moment when we shall succeed, or find ourselves in a worse plight than before. Are you ready, Enoch?"

"Go on! I'll keep close behind Seth."

The three boys, trembling with suppressed excitement, hardly daring to breathe, stepped out into the corridor with as much boldness as it was possible to assume.

No one could be seen save the sentry at the outer door, and he stood, musket in hand, more like a statue than a living being.

The thought came to Jacob that this guard could not have been the one who gave them the signal, otherwise he would have made some gesture for their guidance, and as they walked straight toward him the boy believed the bold scheme was already a failure.

The soldier remained motionless until Jacob was so near that he could touch him, and then he swung open the heavy door.

Jacob stepped out on the sidewalk almost fearing to turn lest he should see that Seth had been detained.

The prisoner followed without molestation, and as Enoch emerged the door closed, the creaking of the heavy bolt as it was shot into its socket telling that the prison was barred once more; but the prisoner was on the outside.

CHAPTER V.

THE PATROL.

SETH appeared like one in a daze as Jacob and Enoch, ranging themselves on either side, hurried him up the street.

Knowing what apparently convincing proof there was against him, the prisoner had given up all hope from the moment he was locked in a cell, and his escape, having been effected so readily and so quickly, seemed more like a dream than a happy reality.

Until they arrived at Sixth Street, which was as far as the town extended in that direction, not a word was spoken, and then Jacob, unloosening the bag of provisions which he had carried over his shoulder, said as he handed it to Seth:

"Here is sufficient food for two days. You are to make your way toward Valley Forge without thinking of fatigue, for should you be captured again no one can save you from a disgracefnl death."

"But tell me why I was allowed to come out of jail?"

"A friend of yours, whose name must never be

mentioned, arranged everything. We had only to go in and walk away with you."

"What friend have I got who is so powerful?" Seth asked in amazement.

"We are bound never to speak his name in connection with your escape, for what he has done this night would seem like treason to those who did not believe our story. You will guess in time, and it is enough now that you are free."

"But am I not to see mother?"

"You must go without delay. We will tell her what has happened, if she doesn't hear from other sources that a prisoner has escaped, and she would be the first to insist that you hurry away from this town, rather than linger where those who might capture you would be certain to kill."

"Where are you going?"

"We have been advised to return home; but depend upon it, Seth, we shall see you in the Continental army before many days have passed, for now it is our firm intention to enlist at the first opportunity. Remember that you will not be safe until you are with our friends, and that it is likely you can continue the flight uninterruptedly during the hours of darkness. When the morning comes you must be more cautious. Now don't linger. Good-by, Seth dear, and remember that we will see you again as soon as possible."

The escaped prisoner clasped his friends by the hands for a single instant, and then turned as if reluctant to leave them.

Jacob pressed Enoch's arm in token that the parting must not be prolonged, and the two hurried away, leaving Seth to complete the work which had been so well begun.

"It seems as if we were running away from him," Enoch said five minutes later when they were hurrying down the street.

"And that is exactly what we are doing. So long as we stayed he would have lingered, and time is too precious to him to admit of its being spent in idle conversation."

"Even now it hardly seems possible we have really gotten him out of prison."

"That is because matters moved so swiftly after we began. Thank God there is no question about his freedom, and, with so many hours the start, I don't believe he is in much danger of being overtaken."

"Not unless his escape is discovered very soon.

"That is not likely to happen, for at this hour none of the Britishers would visit him, and we may count on the whole affair remaining a secret until some time after sunrise to-morrow. Of course I shan't think of going to Germantown to-night, and shall sleep with you once more."

"Mother will be glad to see us back. The fact of your asking for provisions most likely caused her to believe we were going on a journey, and I know how worried she will be until we are with her once more."

The boys were walking at a rapid pace.

The streets were deserted, and there appeared

little likelihood of their meeting any one before arriving at Enoch's home.

It seemed as if everything was working in their favor on this night, and Jacob was on the point of giving words to his happiness because of the successful issue of their scheme, when the measured tramp, tramp, tramp of men told that an armed force was abroad.

"It is the patrol!" Enoch whispered. "Now unless we can keep out of sight there is a chance for trouble!"

"Don't run!" his companion said sharply as he was quickening his pace, evidently with the intention of darting into the nearest doorway. "Flight would arouse suspicion, and most likely we have been heard talking. Our only course is to walk boldly on, as if we had good reasons for being abroad at this hour."

That they had been observed even in the darkness was apparent as the officer commanding the patrol stepped quickly toward them, and the boys involuntarily halted.

"Who are you, and what are you doing abroad at midnight?"

"I live in Germantown," Jacob replied, not thinking it wise to mention his own name, for Ludwick the baker was well known to the enemy, "and am visiting my friend, Enoch Ball, who lives on Letitia Street. We have been out in the country, and were delayed longer than was anticipated."

"I have heard it mentioned that young Ball and

Chris Ludwick's son were friends of the spy who will soon be hanged," one of the soldiers said.

"Is the baker your father?" the officer asked sharply.

"He is."

"And you and the spy are cronies?"

"Yes."

"Fall in then! It will be as well that we have a full explanation as to why you are out at this time of night."

"Do you mean that we are prisoners?" Enoch asked in dismay.

"Exactly, and as I do not propose to give further explanation, you may as well move on at once. Don't attempt to play any tricks, or it will be exceedingly unpleasant."

Not until this moment did Jacob remember that he and Enoch were carrying the fetters which had been removed from Seth's legs and arms, and now he deplored most bitterly his excess of precaution in taking them away from the jail.

He had thought that by removing the irons Seth's escape would appear more of a mystery; instead of which they had simply kept evidences which might convict them of complicity in a deed that would be most severely punished.

He had made a mistake in thus being so cautious, and instantly this fact came into his mind he made a second and yet graver one, by attempting to dispose of the telltale fetters.

As he flung the irons from him by a quick move-

ment, which he hoped might fail to attract attention, they struck with an ominous clang upon a rock in the street, and at the same instant the officer seized him by the collar.

"One of you see what that was he threw away! These boys who have had an excursion into the country may not be as innocent of wrongdoing as at first appeared."

It was not difficult for the soldiers to find the heavy fetters, and the officer appeared perplexed when they were brought to him; turning he asked sternly:

"Where did you get these?"

Jacob made no reply.

"Search him!" was the sharp command. "Search them both!"

As a matter of course the second pair of irons was found in Enoch's possession, and now the boys were no longer ordered to "fall in," but were marched to the prison closely guarded by a soldier on either side.

They had succeeded in effecting the release of their friend, and by so doing had placed themselves in a decidedly disagreeable, if not dangerous, position.

The same soldier who had allowed them to march out of the jail with the prisoner received them when they were brought in, and as he opened the door in response to the summons of the patrol an expression of surprise, almost dismay, passed over his face. It was gone instantly, however, and once

more he was the same automaton it is believed a soldier should be.

"You will lock these prisoners in securely, and take care that no one has access to them until the officer of the day sends his instructions."

Once more the boys walked through the dimly lighted corridor, passed the cell from which Seth had so lately escaped, and were thrust into the one adjoining.

Then the door was locked upon them, and they were left in the darkness to their gloomy reflections.

"I don't reckon we shall find much of a bed in this place," Jacob said grimly, as he felt his way around what seemed little more than a cage. "But we ought to get along for one night in such a hole without grumbling, considering what we have accomplished."

"They will understand because of the fetters that we helped Seth away," Enoch said in a tremulous tone.

"We knew we were taking chances when the work was begun; but I don't think even General Howe will go so far as to declare us guilty unless he has some proof that we did such a thing."

"The fetters should be enough."

"I don't think so. They must be like plenty of others belonging to the Britishers, and who shall say they were the ones Seth wore? Look here, Enoch, the situation is this: We must hold our tongues, absolutely refusing to answer a single ques-

tion, no matter if they flog us, for once we confess, or admit anything, we shall be in a bad plight."

"Do they hang people for helping spies escape?"

"No, Enoch, you must not get any such ideas into your mind. If you begin to think we are in danger of death you will lose courage, and unless I'm mistaken we shall need plenty of it before we are through with this work. Let's make ourselves as comfortable as possible, and keep our thoughts from disagreeable subjects."

Bravely as Jacob tried to combat his and his friend's gloomy forebodings, both the boys were wretched in mind as well as body.

To sleep even under the most favorable circumstances, so far as bodily comfort was concerned, would have been well-nigh impossible while they were in such a condition of mental depression, and even though there had been nothing to cause alarm, wooing slumber on the stone floor was a most difficult task.

Jacob positively refused to speculate as to the dangers which might threaten, and Enoch was absolutely unable to talk of anything else, consequently little or no conversation was indulged in, and when the morning came both listened intently for those sounds which would betoken that the prisoner's escape was discovered.

They heard voices in the corridor concerning some movement which had been made during the night, and, going close to the door, Jacob learned that a body of troops had left the city the evening previous.

For what purpose he could not learn, but judged that it was the movement which Seth had learned of from the officers in his mother's home.

There came into the boy's mind the thought that some important maneuver was being executed, and he fancied they must be benefited thereby, since the attention of the commanding general would thus be diverted from them.

It was not until many days after that he learned this movement, supposed to have been so important, was nothing more than the advance of fourteen hundred soldiers to the relief of some refugees who were being besieged by the Americans at Billingsport.

An hour after sunrise the boys heard the creaking of bolts as the cell adjoining theirs was opened. Then came an exclamation of surprise, hurried footsteps, and they knew Seth's escape had just been discovered.

"He has had at least eight hours, and should be well on his way to Valley Forge by this time," Jacob whispered triumphantly, and Enoch replied:

"If we had only gone with him the scheme would have been a great success."

Two hours later the cell-door was opened, and the prisoners ordered out in charge of a squad of soldiers, Jacob whispering as they crossed the threshold:

"Remember, Enoch, don't give any information, no matter what they may do!"

The boys looked in vain for a friendly face as

they were marched out of the prison between two files of soldiers, but none met their gaze.

If there were any sympathetic ones among the crowd of curious people who gathered around the prisoners and their escort, none dared betray the true state of their feelings lest they be accused of treason, and the two had a very good idea of the sense of loneliness amid a throng which must have come to Seth while he was being conducted through the city.

At the town-house the prisoners were halted for a few moments on the sidewalk, and then taken inside, where were several officers seated around a table on which were many papers.

Here their names were asked and given, and then came the question which both knew must not be answered:

"Why were you on the street last night at an hour past midnight?"

"If we make any explanation, except that which you have decided we must make, it will not be believed," Jacob replied stoutly, although he was far from feeling brave just at that moment.

"Do not fall into the mistake of being impertinent, you young rebel. Anything of that kind will only aggravate the offense."

"We have committed no offense, sir. Since you British have been in possession of the city we have kept the peace, molesting no man."

"Is it not true that you have been carrying information to the rebels?"

"No, sir; we have done nothing of the kind."

"The spy who was arrested while returning from the American lines was a particular friend of yours?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you knew why he left the city on the day he was arrested?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you aid him in any way?"

"There was nothing we could have done."

"Do you know that he has escaped?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then you must have helped him."

"It was not necessary we should do that in order to learn he had given you the slip. We were put into the same prison he occupied, and could readily hear the soldiers talking when it was discovered he had gone."

"It is evident these young rebels have been well schooled, colonel, and you will never arrive at the truth save by harsh measures," one of the officers said petulantly to him who was conducting the examination. "A dozen lashes would soon put them in the proper frame of mind for telling the truth."

"Such means must be employed if milder measures fail; but I do not care to go into the business of flogging children if it can be avoided."

"But these rebels are far from being children. They are active enemies against the king, and should be given the same treatment accorded their elders."

"My lad," the colonel said, turning once more to

Jacob, "there is no necessity for spending time at cross-purposes. Seth Graydon, the spy, has escaped; you are known to have been very friendly with him—have acknowledged you were aware in advance of his visit to the rebel camp. You were found loitering on the street after midnight, and when apprehended had about your persons fetters similar to those which he wore. Your best plan is to make a free confession of how you aided him in escaping, for by so doing you may avoid exceedingly harsh treatment."

"We thank you for the advice, sir, because it seems as if you really meant it for our good; but we have nothing to confess. Of course, you can flog us as often as you see fit; but that will not effect anything."

"You mean that you are determined to hold your tongues as long as possible?" one of the party said.

"We shall say no more than we have said already. It is true we were out last night; we had been spending the afternoon in the grove back of the Carpenter house, and were walking peaceably toward Letitia Street when taken into custody. That is all we can tell, and flogging will not bring more."

The officers conversed together several moments in a tone so low that the prisoners could not distinguish the words, and then the colonel, who had acted as spokesman, said sharply:

"Hark you, lads. You are not to be punished

now for your refusal to speak, because I wish to report the case to the commanding general before resorting to harsh measures; you shall have time to consider the matter thoroughly, and when questioned again will be forced to make answer. Sergeant, remove the prisoners, and see to it that no one is allowed to communicate with them."

The boys were decidedly surprised at such leniency; both expected a severe flogging, and failed to understand why it had not been administered.

During the march back to the jail the sergeant in command of the squad said in a friendly tone to his prisoners:

"You boys must not make the mistake of thinking you can better your position by refusing to answer the questions asked. I do not understand why Colonel Monckton let you off so easily this time, for he is not given to being tender with the whip; but this I can assure you, that at the next refusal to speak the punishment will be inflicted, and none the easier because it has been delayed."

"We have nothing to tell," Jacob replied quietly. "If a friend of ours is your prisoner are we responsible for his safe-keeping? If he escapes, is it certain we are guilty of having aided him in avoiding a disgraceful death under a false charge?"

"The fetters found in your possession are sufficient proof that you were concerned in the matter."

"I do not understand how that can be, sergeant. If we had been able to get him away from your

men, and out of jail, do you think we would be foolish enough to carry his fetters in our pockets?"

"If you did not do so, how came you by the irons?"

"That is a question we can't answer. Why not demand to know who paid for our coats, or where we procured our hats?"

"Your sharpness won't avail you, lad, when next you are brought before Colonel Monckton. I would like to have you escape the whip, for I'm not friendly disposed to such things, especially when a boy is to be flogged; but if you won't take advice you must suffer, and there's the end of it."

"We thank you for your kindness, sergeant," Enoch said, speaking for the first time since they left the prison; "but there is nothing for us to tell. We can explain about the fetters; but shall insist that Colonel Monckton has no right to flog us until he has some proof to connect us with Seth's escape."

"He thinks he has proof enough already, and so do I, for the matter of that. It's none of my broth, though, and I hope I'll be off duty when you're brought out for punishment."

"When is it likely to happen?" Jacob asked.

"That is what I can't say. It may be to-morrow, or a week from then; but it's bound to come some day if you continue as stiff-necked as you are this morning."

The conversation with this particular member of the British army was ended, and the remainder of the journey made in silence.

On arriving at the prison they were handed over to the same soldier who had been on duty when they entered the gloomy place twice before, and he conducted them to the cell in a stolid manner, apparently paying no heed to either, save to assure himself they did not give him the slip.

When he had thrust them into the cage-like apartment, however, and while he was standing at the door gazing around as if to satisfy himself everything was as it should be, he whispered cautiously:

"You have done well, lads. Some one we know says that you are to keep up your courage and hold your tongues."

Then the door was closed with a resounding crash, as if the jailer feared one of the prisoners might reply, and was desirous of drowning the sound of his voice.

"He must have received that message since we left Colonel Monckton, otherwise it would not be known that we had refused to speak," Jacob whispered, and there was a hopeful ring in his tone. "The 'one we know' was where he heard all we said."

"But it isn't likely he could help us without bringing down suspicion on himself."

"It should be enough that he knows what is being done. We have one friend among the Britishers, and that is more than Seth could have said when he was in jail. I wonder if they count on giving us anything to eat?"

"I don't feel as if I should ever be hungry again," Enoch replied mournfully.

"But you will, and you must! If we lose courage now it can only make matters worse, without bettering them any. I reckon on getting out of this in time, and of escaping even a whipping."

"How?"

"That's what I don't know; but it is better to think that way than to sit here fancying each moment we feel the lash of wire across our backs. Hello, we're going to have a visitor!"

The door was opened; but no one entered.

A soldier shoved carelessly into the cell a jar of water and two loaves of bread, after which the door was closed again.

"It doesn't look as if we should hurt ourselves by eating too much," Jacob said with an effort to appear light-hearted; "but it is a good deal more than many friends of the cause in this very city will have set before them to-day. Come, Enoch, let's dispose of our rations in order to be ready for the next supply when it is brought."

CHAPTER VI.

RELEASED.

During five long, weary weeks did Jacob and Enoch remain prisoners, and although they lived in momentary expectation of a public flogging, the punishment was not inflicted.

Twice more were the boys taken before Colonel Monckton, and on each occasion he gave them to understand that unless satisfactory answers were returned to his questions they would be whipped severely.

Jacob, who acted as spokesman, refused to obey the command, as he did on the first occasion, alleging that he could not explain how the fetters came in their possession without rendering a third party liable to suspicion, and claimed he had rather "be flogged until he was nigh dead" than cause suffering to an innocent person.

The British soldier who had allowed Seth to leave the jail unchallenged was on duty fully half the time the boys were held as prisoners, and now and then spoke words of cheer, giving them to understand that they were indebted to Lord Gordon for their escape from a public flogging.

During the first four or five days of captivity

they questioned the soldier eagerly, and at every opportunity, regarding the possible recapture of Seth; but he had no information to give them, and this fact was decidedly more satisfactory than if he had been able to tell them of his whereabouts, since it showed that their comrade was yet free.

After a week passed there was no longer any doubt but that Seth had succeeded in gaining the American lines, and being thus assured they had saved his life, the boys could have borne even a public flogging with a certain degree of equanimity, because of what had been accomplished.

As a matter of course Enoch could have no communication with his mother, for orders had been given that the prisoners should be allowed no visitors.

He believed, however, she knew all concerning him that could have been told, through Lord Gordon.

It was possible for the boys to have a general idea of what was going on outside, owing to the conversations which they could overhear between the soldiers, and it seemed as if the one whom they looked upon as a friend made it an especial point to converse with his fellows where they might overhear all that was said.

Thus it was they were aware that, on the 24th and 26th of the month, detachments of British troops went out successfully against the Continentals; that on the 30th Abercrombie led his men against Lacey near the Crooked Billet, forcing that officer to

flight, killing nearly a hundred soldiers, capturing fifty prisoners, and destroying or bringing away all his baggage and stores.

It was on the second day after Sir Henry Clinton arrived in Philadelphia that Jacob and Enoch were released from prison.

No formalities accompanied this, to them, very desirable change of condition.

Ten days previous they had been assured by Colonel Monckton that there was sufficient proof to connect them with Seth's escape, and that their punishment, unless they confessed, would be exceptionally severe.

Therefore it was that they were quite as much surprised as delighted when, on this particular morning, the cell-doors were opened and the officer in charge of the prison announced that they were at liberty to depart.

"You will be closely watched," he said warningly, "and rest assured that at the first suspicious action on the part of either, both will be brought here again. A second arrest will be more serious than the first."

"If I have my way about it there won't be any second arrest," Jacob said emphatically, and when the outer door of the jail was opened he and Enoch darted swiftly through, as if fearing the permission to depart might be reconsidered if they should linger in leaving.

When the boys arrived at Enoch's home Mrs. Ball was not particularly surprised to see them, nor was

it necessary they should make any explanations as to the cause of their long absence.

She had received, at least three times each week, an unsigned letter containing full particulars as to their condition, and had known several days previous that they were about to be discharged.

"Well, Lord—I mean our British friend, is what you might call a right up and down good fellow, even if he is fighting on the wrong side!" Jacob exclaimed when Mrs. Ball explained why she had not been particularly anxious regarding her son during his long imprisonment. "If all the king's soldiers were like him, I allow there wouldn't be very much fighting in this country."

"He has taken a great deal of trouble to do a favor to three boys who had no claim upon him," Enoch added reflectively.

"But he believed Seth was innocent, and began the good work by trying to prevent his brother officers from killing one who was no spy," Mrs. Ball suggested.

"Yet Seth was not what you might really call innocent, nor, for that matter, were any of us, because he did carry information to our friends, and we stood ready to help him."

"But you were not spies."

"No, mother, not exactly; but much as I hate the British, I am bound to admit they had good cause for punishing us. I think the time has come when Jacob and I should join Seth at the first opportunity."

"You mean that you will enlist?" his mother asked anxiously.

"It is our duty; but if you should say that you were not willing yet——"

"I shall say nothing of the kind, my son. You are old enough to decide for yourselves, and if you think duty calls you it isn't for me to set up my own desires against it. You must remember, however, that you are now looked upon with suspicion by the enemy, and it will not be as simple a matter to gain the Continental camp as it would have been before Seth was arrested."

"We shall succeed in doing it, never you fear," Enoch replied in a tone of assurance, and thus it was settled that at the earliest possible moment he and Jacob would enlist in the American army.

As the days passed, however, the would-be recruits learned that it was not as easy to leave the city unobserved as it previously had been.

It was well known General Washington was ready for the summer campaign, with his troops better disciplined and better equipped than formerly, and the British officers, understanding that Sir Henry Clinton was making an estimate of their abilities before assuming command of the army, were particularly vigilant.

Neither Jacob nor Enoch had ventured to ask for an interview with Lord Gordon. They understood it might place him in an awkward position if they did so, and that their gratitude could best be shown by treating him as an enemy.

Neither had they seen Seth's mother since their release. It was only reasonable to suppose that Lord Gordon, being an inmate of her house, had kept her as well informed as he had Mrs. Ball. Therefore the boys would be serving her interests as well as their own if they refrained from paying her a visit.

It was arranged that they should take advantage of the first opportunity to leave the city, without feeling obliged to give Enoch's mother notice of the fact, and from the hour when they had been allowed to leave the jail they spent their time roaming around the town, hoping to meet some one who might be able to aid them.

More than once did they discuss the advisability of setting out alone in the direction of Valley Forge, with the hope that they might, before traveling many miles, come upon a detachment of Americans; but each time the subject was introduced they decided that the chances of success were against them, owing to the vigilance of the British.

Twice had they been halted by the patrol, when, without any intention of setting forth on a journey, they had wandered heedlessly near the outskirts of the city, and warned each time as to what would be the result if they were discovered in trying to gain the "rebel" lines.

During such enforced idleness they heard much of the carnival, or "mischianza," as the officers termed it, which was to be given as a testimonial in honor of General Howe on the eve of his retir-

ing from the command of the forces, but had not believed they would be in the city to see the grand display.

The boys knew that General Burgoyne, assisted by Major John Andre, had charge of the preparations; that a mock tournament was to be a portion of the entertainment, and that it would be held at the country-seat of Mr. Wharton on the Delaware River. They heard that a supper-room was being built for the occasion; that mirrors, pictures, and ornaments designed to hold candles, were being borrowed from the wealthy citizens; but yet so great was the desire of both to enroll themselves as soldiers in the patriot army that neither gave much attention to the proposed entertainment, until the morning of the 18th of May, when they were still vainly searching for means of escape.

During that day at least they forgot their desires in the wonderful scene which was presented.

As a matter of course Jacob and Enoch saw only such portion of the entertainment as was given in public; but Major Andre himself wrote an entertaining account to his friends in England which is given here as interesting, inasmuch as it was the first display of the kind ever made in North America.

"A grand regatta began the entertainment. It consisted of three divisions. In the first was the Ferret galley, having on board several general officers and a number of ladies. In the center was the Hussar galley with Sir William and Lord Howe, Sir Henry Clinton, the officers of their suite, and some ladies.

The Cornwallis galley brought up the rear, having on board General Knyphausen and his suite, three British generals and a party of ladies. On each quarter of these galleys, and forming their division, were five flatboats, lined with green cloth, and filled with ladies and gentlemen. In front of the whole were three flat-boats, with a band of music in each. Six barges rowed about each flank, to keep off the swarm of boats that covered the river from side to side. The galleys were decked out with a variety of colors and streamers, and in each flat-boat was displayed the flag of its own division.

"In the stream opposite the center of the city the Fanny, armed ship, magnificently decorated, was placed at anchor, and at some distance ahead lay his majesty's ship Roebuck, with the admiral's flag hoisted at the foretop masthead. The transport ships, extending in a line the whole length of the town, appeared with colors flying and crowded with spectators, as were also the openings of several wharves on shore, exhibiting the most picturesque and enlivening scene the eye could desire. The rendezvous was at Knight's wharf, at the northern extremity of the city. By half-past four the whole company were embarked, and the signal being made by the Vigilant's manning ship, the three divisions rowed slowly down, preserving their proper intervals, and keeping time to the music that led the fleet.

"Arrived between the Fanny and the Market wharf, a signal was made from one of the boats

ahead, and the whole lay upon their oars, while the music played 'God Save the King,' and three cheers given from the vessels were returned from the multitude on shore. By this time the flood tide became too rapid for the galleys to advance; they were therefore quitted, and the company disposed of in different barges. This alteration broke in upon the order of procession, but was necessary to give sufficient time for displaying the entertainments that were prepared on shore.

"The landing place was at the Old Fort, a little to the southward of the town, fronting the building prepared for the reception of the company, about four hundred yards from the water by a gentle ascent. As soon as the general's barge was seen to push from the shore a salute of seventeen guns was fired from the Roebuck, and, after some interval, by the same number from the Vigilant. The company, as they disembarked, arranged themselves into a line of procession, and advanced through an avenue formed by two files of grenadiers, and a line of light horse supporting each file. This avenue led to a square lawn of two hundred and fifty yards on each side, lined with troops, and properly prepared for the exhibition of a tilt and tournament, according to the customs and ordinances of ancient chivalry. We proceeded through the center of the square.

"The music, consisting of all the bands of the army, moved in front. The managers, with favors of white and blue ribbon in their breasts, fol-

lowed next in order. The general, admiral, and the rest of the company, succeeded promiscuously.

"In front appeared the building, bounding the view through a vista formed by two triumphal arches erected at proper intervals in a line with the landing-place. Two pavilions, with rows of benches rising one above the other, and serving as the wings of the first triumphal arch, received the ladies, while the gentlemen arranged themselves in convenient order on each side. On the front seat of each pavilion were placed seven of the principal young ladies of the country, dressed in Turkish habits and wearing in their turbans the favors with which they meant to reward the several knights who were to contend in their honor. These arrangements were scarce made when the sound of trumpets were heard in the distance, and a band of knights, dressed in ancient habits of white and red silk, and mounted on gray horses richly caparisoned in trappings of the same colors, entered the lists, attended by their esquires on foot, in suitable apparel."

Major Andre continues his letter with a long and detailed account of the tournament which followed, and thus concludes:

"The company were regaled with tea, lemonade, and other cooling liquors when they entered the house. On the same floor with the ballroom were four drawing-rooms with sideboards of refreshment. Dancing continued until ten o'clock, when the windows were thrown open, and the display of fire-

works began. At twelve o'clock supper was announced, and large folding-doors, hitherto artfully concealed, being suddenly thrown open, discovered a magnificent saloon with three alcoves on each side which served as sideboards. Fifty-six large pier glasses, ornamented with green silk artificial flowers and ribbons; one hundred branches with three lights in each, trimmed in the same manner as the mirrors; eighteen lusters, each with twenty-four lights, suspended from the ceiling, and ornamented as the branches; three hundred wax tapers disposed along the supper-table; four hundred and thirty covers, twelve hundred dishes, twenty-four black slaves in oriental dresses, with silver collars and bracelets, ranged in two lines, and bending to the ground as the general and admiral approached the saloon. Then came the drinking of healths and the toasts, and after supper the dancing was continued until four o'clock."

It was while the citizens as well as the soldiery were gathered on the riverside, watching the imposing spectacle, that Jacob and Enoch, instead of following the example of those around them and crowding as near to the water's edge as possible, were standing on a slight elevation some distance from the Penny-Pot House landing, when they were accosted by a rough-looking fellow, who, to judge from his dress, was a farm laborer.

"I allow you two lads have allers lived here in Philadelphia, eh?" he began, as if more for the pur-

pose of making an acquaintance than to gain information.

"You surely can't take us for Britishers?" Jacob said laughingly.

"That is not your misfortune," the man replied. "You can be as loyal to the king in the colonies as if you had been born in London."

"And if we *had* been born there we might consider it our duty to be loyal to him; but inasmuch as we are Philadelphia boys the case is different," Jacob replied boldly, despite Enoch's warning glance.

"It is safer to keep the matter a secret if you count on being disloyal," the man said with a grin.

"That is impossible in our case, for two who have been in prison five weeks would be distrusted if they suddenly conceived a love for the king."

"So General Howe believes you are dangerous characters, eh? It seems as if he was afraid of the boys quite a considerable, for I have heard tell how he had old Chris Ludwick's son locked up."

"So he did, and I happen to be that son."

"You?" the man exclaimed with a pretense of surprise. "And who is this with you?"

"It is Enoch Ball. But hark you, friend, I don't understand that you have got any right to ask questions, and perhaps I have given you all the information necessary."

Jacob spoke sharply, for there came into his mind the thought that this stranger was displaying altogether too much interest in what did not concern him personally.

"SO GENERAL HOWE BELIEVES YOU ARE DANGEROUS CHARACTERS, EH?"

Washington at Monmouth, p. 92.

"I don't allow you have," the man replied, glancing furtively around, as if to make certain there were no eavesdroppers near. "If you are Chris Ludwick's son, you was jailed by the Britishers for helping one Seth Graydon, said to be a spy, escape from prison."

The man spoke in such a meaning tone there was no longer any doubt but that his questions meant something more than idle curiosity, and both Jacob and Enoch turned upon him suddenly.

"What do you know about Seth Graydon?" the latter asked sharply.

"You will learn fully as much if you don't make such a noise," the stranger replied in a low tone. "I can't say that I know anything particular about Seth, except that he wanted me, in case I happened to run across Jacob Ludwick and Enoch Ball, to give them his best compliments."

"Where is he?" Jacob asked eagerly.

"I allow you can make a pretty good guess, so there's no need of my going into particulars, especially round here, where the chances are it might lead a fellow into trouble."

"Where did you come from?"

"It is best not to ask too many questions, Jacob Ludwick. The least that is said in this 'ere city is the soonest mended. If it should happen, though, that you knew anything which might be important for your friends to know, now is the time to repeat it, and I'll take care it reaches the proper quarter."

"Then you are——"

"I work on a farm up the Schuylkill with a Quaker by the name of Parker, and am down here to see the brave doings of the king's officers."

"Do you know where we can join any portion of the American army?"

"For what purpose?"

"We count on enlisting as soon as we are able to leave the city; but the Britishers have kept a close watch on us since we were let out of jail, and thus far it has been impossible to get away."

"Take my advice, and stay where you are a spell longer. It won't be many days before there'll be a change around here, and after that perhaps you won't be so closely watched. If you should happen to hear anything that would benefit your friends, and want to sent them word, you might find me somewhere near about the Blue Anchor, almost any forenoon, when I have disposed of my produce."

There was no necessity for the man to make further explanations; the boys understood that in his assumed character of a farm laborer he was acting the spy, and by bringing in produce to sell would have no trouble in entering or leaving the city.

It was just such an acquaintance as Jacob had been particularly anxious to make; but he was disappointed and perplexed because the proposition that he and Enoch enlist was not received with favor.

"It isn't likely we could learn very much that would interest you," Master Ludwick said after a

brief pause, "for since our arrest we have but little chance of hearing any British secrets."

"You are not hindered from roaming around the town as you wish?"

"Oh, no; we are prevented, however, from going very far into the country, and have been stopped several times by the patrol."

"Then spend your time observing the movements of the troops, and take particular notice if any activity prevails among the soldiers to-morrow night. You can be of more service here during the next two weeks than you could in the ranks."

"But you are in town every day, and can see quite as much as we."

"I only remain here long enough to sell my wares and to drink a pint of beer at the Blue Anchor. It would seem strange if a farmer was overfond of watching the soldiers. There are several in town who, during such time as we are haggling over the price of vegetables, manage to let me know what they have seen, and when it was made known that we wanted to increase the number of our friends here, Seth Graydon told General Dickinson you would be willing to do all in your power."

"Seth was right. We are more than willing; but hardly know how to set about it."

"There's but little more to do than loiter around the city listening to the general gossip, and observing the movements of the troops. You boys certainly are bright enough to know by general appearances if any great force is making preparations

to leave, and even though you have been under arrest for aiding a boy whom the Britishers called a spy, I don't think you would be interfered with if you exercised proper caution. It is especially necessary that our friends are all on the alert during the next forty-eight hours, and I shall come into town very early to-morrow morning, and again in the afternoon, so that you will have two chances to report anything you may have learned."

"Is there reason to believe the British will make a move within that time?"

"They certainly will, if, as is probable, the Tories between here and Valley Forge bring in information of what is being done."

"Is General Washington to make an attack?" Jacob asked eagerly.

"Hardly that; but some of his forces will move toward this city very shortly, and it becomes highly important he should have early information of what the enemy may do when they learn of it. We have talked here as long as is safe, for, although people seem intent upon the brave show General Howe's officers are making, there may be some whose business it is to pay attention to their neighbors."

The stranger lounged away as if following with his eyes the spectacle upon the water, and when he was gone Jacob said in an exultant tone:

"It seems that we can be of some service to the cause even if we do not enlist."

"Yes, and Seth did us a good turn when he said we were ready to perform our share in the work."

"Yet since we met this stranger, Enoch, we have agreed to become spies—there is no other name for it—and if we should now be put under arrest by the Britishers, there would be good cause for dealing out to us that punishment which Seth escaped."

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE ALERT.

Although fully aware of the fact that by following the suggestions of the stranger they were jeopardizing their lives, Jacob and Enoch felt very proud because of the confidence in them thus apparently displayed by the leaders of the cause.

They had no idea as to the identity of the man with whom they had talked, but it seemed positive he was one in whom the Continental officers trusted implicitly, otherwise he would not have been selected for so dangerous and responsible a position as that of gathering information in the very heart of the British camp.

It was evident, at least to the boys, that he had sufficient authority to thus attach them to the American army, and both were well content to delay signing their names on the enlistment rolls, because of the fact that they were occupying much more responsible and dangerous posts by remaining in the city.

It was not probable the enemy would be contemplating any important movement while the festivities were in progress, yet Jacob and Enoch walked to and fro through the streets of the now

almost deserted city, believing their new duties demanded such diligence; but seeing nothing more formidable than an unusually surly patrol who were out of temper because forced to be on duty while their comrades were participating in the merry-making.

Not until nearly midnight did they return to Enoch's home, and by daylight next morning both were on the alert once more.

During the forenoon they saw in the market-place, haggling over the price of a cabbage as if his only thought was to sell his wares to the best advantage, their acquaintance of the previous day.

Jacob would have entered into conversation with the man but for the fact that Enoch restrained him by saying:

"It is not well to be seen talking with him when it is unnecessary, lest we rouse the suspicions of the Britishers. We have nothing to report, and he will so understand it when we pass by without speaking."

"But he may have something to say to us."

"If he has we shall soon know it; but unless he makes a sign we had better keep on our way."

The seeming farmer paid no attention to the boys; tha he saw them was evident, but he did not so much as raise his eyes after one quick glance, and Jacob understood that Enoch was wiser than he in such matters.

During this day it was as if the enemy was resting from the fatigue of merry-making; but few

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officers were to be seen on the streets until late in the afternoon, and at the different barracks there was even less than the ordinary amount of noise.

It was five o'clock when the boys turned from High into Second Street believing their day's work nearly done.

The sidewalk in front of the City Tavern was thronged with officers and civilinas, and Jacob whispered:

"I wonder what is going on there? Some of the crowd appear to be excited."

"Suppose we pass the place singly, for by so doing we shall have a better chance to linger. You go ahead, and I'll follow when you are halfway through the crowd," Enoch suggested, and Jacob acted upon the idea at once.

Before he was well among the throng he heard that which caused him the liveliest surprise.

"So Lafayette's tattered retinue have abandoned their mud-holes, have they?" a gentleman who had just come up said to a group of officers, and one of the latter replied:

"There appears to be no doubt about it. A Quaker on whom the Frenchman quartered himself has sent word that he is at Barren Hill, with twenty-five hundred picked men and five cannon."

"What does it mean? Can it be possible Washington believes for a single instant that his rag-tag and bob-tail can stand against General Howe's forces?"

"It is difficult to say just what the rebel com-

mander believes," one of the officers replied with a laugh. "There are times when he behaves as if he thought he could annihilate us, and then suddenly he turns tail as if afraid of his life."

"But if he contemplates any audacious movement, why does he send Lafayette?" the citizen continued. "He is hardly more than a boy, and surely Washington must have more experienced officers."

"He has no abler soldier than Lafayette, boy though he is. He has had the advantage of a thorough military education, and will make better play for us than many of the elder men."

"Do you apprehend any difficulty in disposing of him if he continues his march? I should say he might be advancing on Germantown, if he makes his first halt at Barren Hill."

The officers were greatly pleased at this question, and the spokesman continued, as soon as his mirth had subsided sufficiently to admit of his speaking:

"We shall make short work of him if we are allowed to take the field; but I question if General Howe will pay any attention to the movement until it has developed further."

Jacob was forced to pass this particular group lest the fact that he was listening to the conversation should become known; but before getting out of the throng he heard all the particulars that could be given relative to the advance of the "rebels."

Some of the gossipers believed Washington in-

tended to make an attack on Philadelphia; others had the idea that he was preparing to retreat, fearing lest Sir Henry Clinton, after taking command of the army, would press him too warmly, and that this movement of Lafayette's but cloaked the design. Not a few thought that the rebels had decided upon a vigorous campaign, of which this unaccountable advance was proof, and before many moments such belief was shared by the majority.

Once Jacob had passed beyond the excited throng he waited with the utmost impatience for Enoch to join him, and when, after what seemed an exceedingly long time, his comrade came up looking surprised and alarmed, Master Ludwick motioned for him to follow toward the bank of the river.

Not until the boys stood where there was no possibility the conversation could be overheard did Jacob speak, and then it was to say:

"Now we understand why the man who talked with us was so anxious to learn what might be done by the Britishers. He knew General Lafayette was about to move, and expected troops would be sent out from here at once."

"If that is done we shall be of but little service, for the soldiers will march as fast as we can."

"That remains to be seen. The time has come when we can do work that will be of importance, and we must not lose the opportunity."

"Then we had best get around by the barracks; we can be of no service while we stand here talking idly."

"It is not idle talk, as you shall see. The thought has come to me that if the enemy makes any move to-night it is our duty to take the news to General Washington, or General Lafayette, before the Britishers can get very far on the road."

"I don't understand how it is to be done."

"Are you willing to run a big risk?"

"I am ready to do anything in aid of the cause."

"Then listen. I know where Wharton, the Tory, has two horses stabled, and it will not be hard work to get them out after the groom has gone away for the night. If anything is done by the Britishers which our friends should know, we can take them, follow the Schuylkill up till we come to the bridge, and be at General Lafayette's camp before daylight."

"But that would be stealing!" Enoch cried.

"I don't think so, under the circumstances. It will be only an honest act, for we do it to save the lives of our friends."

"That would prevent our coming back to Philadelphia while the Britishers are here, and the stranger said we might be of more service in this city than we could in the army."

"So we shall if we carry such important news, and it is better for us to leave here on an errand like that than remain idle when the cause may suffer."

"I will do whatever you say is right, Jacob, but do not want to serve our country by becoming a thief."

"That you will not become, I tell you!" Jacob cried impatiently.

"It shall be as you say."

"Very well. Now I will go in one direction and you in another. We'll meet on High Street near Fourth. If nothing has been seen we must continue to walk around until certain the Britishers do not intend to leave the city."

Having thus mapped out his plan Jacob started up Walnut Street at his best pace, and Enoch went in the opposite direction, feeling rather doubtful of such honesty as displayed itself by the theft of two horses.

Not until eight o'clock in the evening did either of the boys see anything to denote that the enemy's troops would be moved that night, and then it was as if all the preparations had been made in an instant.

It was Enoch who was standing in front of General Grant's quarters when that gentleman came out attended by two of his staff, and the boy heard him say petulantly:

"We are forced to go on a wild-goose chase, while the more fortunate fellows are enjoying themselves at the play. I expected to see at least two acts of Douglas, and had invited some ladies to accompany me."

"Are we likely to go far?" one of his companions asked.

"To Barren Hill; and on arriving there we shall find our French bird has flown, although General Howe is so certain of capturing him that he has in-

vited a large party to take supper with the proposed captive to-morrow night, while Admiral Howe has given orders to have a frigate made ready for sailing with Lafayette on board. It would create a sensation if we should send the marquis to England as a prisoner!"

"Indeed it would, and I only hope he will give us half a chance to catch him. How large a force shall we have?"

"Five thousand in my column and two thousand under Grey"

"That will be plenty to do the work, and it isn't impossible we may succeed in surprising him. Our preparations have been made very quietly."

"Only those engaged in the service have any idea of what it is proposed to do, and all of us have been sworn to secrecy. I shall——"

The speakers moved on, and Enoch could not distinguish the remainder of the conversation; but he had heard enough to change his mind as to the honesty of stealing horses, and now thought only of the possibility that they might not succeed in such purpose.

Hastening to the rendezvous at full speed, he found Jacob awaiting him and displaying every evidence of agitation and impatience.

"I thought you would never come," he whispered eagerly. "We have no time to lose, for I have seen more than a thousand soldiers in the ranks ready for a march."

"And I have heard exactly how many are to go;

but we must hurry to the Tory's stable, for there is no time to lose!" and Enoch urged his comrade forward, telling him while they walked so swiftly as to be almost running that which he had learned.

"No two boys ever had such an opportunity as we've got now!" Jacob said triumphantly. "If we can be the first to carry the news to General Lafayette, it will be a work that even General Washington would thank us for! We shall find no difficulty in enlisting in any regiment we choose, and who knows but we'll be made officers?"

"I don't understand how that could be, when we are not even soldiers; a man must have had experience before he can command others."

"Couldn't we soon gain that?"

"We'd better give all our attention to getting the horses. If we succeed in finding General Lafayette I shall have reward enough, and a commission as colonel wouldn't make me any happier."

"I'd rather be an officer than a private," Jacob replied decidedly, "and we're now in a fair way to wear swords."

The pace at which they were traveling was not well suited for a prolonged conversation, and the boys were panting so heavily that it was absolutely necessary to remain silent until they were in the vicinity of the Tory's stable.

The building was situated a hundred yards or more from the dwelling, and no one could be seen in the vicinity.

Jacob forced his companion to halt where a clump

of bushes hid them from view of any one who might pass that way, until they had regained their breath, and then said hurriedly:

"I know the man who takes care of the horses. He boards at the third house from here, and doesn't often come back in the evening after his day's work is done. The stable door opens toward Wharton's house, and our greatest danger will be in getting the animals out. I'll go ahead; if you fail to hear anything for five minutes, follow me."

"Go on; don't waste any more time, for if the soldiers set out ahead of us we shall find it difficult to pass them."

Master Ludwick made his way toward the building as if stealing horses was a work with which he was thoroughly conversant, and when the specified time had elapsed Enoch followed.

The fact that a play was being performed at the theater, and also that nearly all the male population of the city were congregated in the business portion of the town discussing this unexpected move on Lafayette's part, was of material aid to the boys in their undertaking.

Not a light could be seen in the Tory's home, and it was situated so far out of the city there was little fear pedestrians would pass at that hour in the evening.

When Enoch entered the barn he understood by the subdued noise that Master Ludwick was bridling a horse, and he whispered:

"Are there two here?"

"Yes; I've got a bridle on one, and if you'll hold him I'll take out the other. We can't stop to find saddles."

"There's no need of anything of that kind, but I think we should have something in the shape of whips, in case we're pursued."

"We can find a stick once we are clear of the city. Have you got hold of the bridle?"

"Yes; I'll take care of this fellow. Get the other quickly, for if any one should come now we'd be in a bad plight. I had rather be in prison as a spy than a horse thief."

That Jacob was familiar with the interior of the stable was proved by the celerity of his movements.

Although Enoch was in that frame of mind when the seconds drag like minutes, it seemed to him as if he had but just taken charge of the first animal before his comrade had the other in the floor.

There was hardly time for one to have counted twenty when Master Ludwick opened the stable door cautiously as he whispered:

"Mount, Enoch, and ride at a walk until we are so far away that the hoof-beats won't be heard in case any of the family should chance to be at home. Remember, we must keep together as long as possible; but if it happens that we are separated, each must do his best at finding General Lafayette's camp!"

"Don't stop to give orders now, but come on!" Enoch replied nervously as he mounted, and in

another moment the young patriots were riding slowly up the street.

Neither dared to speak, and the noise of the animals' feet on the hard road sounded so loud in their ears that it seemed as if any one half a mile away must hear it.

Both the boys understood, however, that considerably more noise would be made if they allowed their horses to trot, and, dangerous though the position was, they reined their steeds down to a walk until fully a quarter of a mile had been traversed, when Jacob said grimly:

"It's time to let them out now, and if we are caught it won't be because we haven't been cautious enough!"

The horses, impatient at having been restrained, darted forward swiftly when the reins were loosened, and Enoch cried in delight:

"They are in the proper trim for rapid traveling, and we should be able to keep ahead of foot soldiers, for, of course, we are in advance of them."

"I don't believe the Britishers have started yet, and it's almost certain there is no enemy between us and the American force. We've just the same as won our swords already!"

"Never mind the swords if we——"

Enoch ceased speaking very suddenly as a voice, coming apparently from the thicket that bordered the road, cried sternly:

"Halt! Halt or I fire!"

Instead of making any reply Jacob struck his

horse with both heels, darting ahead of Enoch for the time being, and in another instant the command rang out:

"Fire! Then see that they do not escape!"

"They're mounted men!" Enoch cried in fear as he bent over the neck of the horse, involuntarily glancing back just as a broad sheet of flame lighted up the trees a short distance in the rear, and he heard the whistling of bullets over his head almost at the same instant that the reports of the weapons rang out.

"Are you hurt, Jake?" he cried anxiously.

"Not so much as a scratch; but this isn't the time to talk. Those fellows have horses, and it's a question how long these can hold out. Wharton never was known to keep very good stock, so father says."

Enoch was not exactly in that frame of mind where he could best speculate upon the faults or merits of the Tory's horses; but he was thoroughly aware that he and his comrade would soon have a very good idea of the abilities of these two animals as compared with those in the rear.

Glancing back hurriedly the boy saw a group of horsemen in sharp pursuit, and he decided there could not be less than half a dozen, all of whom were in uniform.

The thought came into his mind that this party had been posted on the road to prevent any one from carrying information to the enemy, and now, when it was too late, he remembered that he and

Jacob had twice before been turned back by a patrol at this very point.

"We should have remembered it," he said to himself. "It would not have been much out of our way if we had ridden across the field, and then we shouldn't be pressing our horses at their best speed when the journey has but just begun."

It was too late now to indulge in regrets. The pursuers were making every effort to end the chase quickly, and there was good reason to believe the weapons would again be used, when a chance shot might end the chase by crippling one of the animals even if it failed to hit a human target.

Enoch was not urging the steed he rode to its best pace, but contented himself with holding the advantage he had over the enemy; while Jacob had used his heels as spurs to such effect that his horse was far in advance.

During half an hour the race was continued, and then the animals showed signs of fatigue. Now it was necessary for Enoch to urge his on, while Jacob's, less fresh because of the first great burst of speed, was slowly falling to the rear.

"I won't run away from you," Enoch said encouragingly. "Their horses must be as tired as ours; but if they've got better wind, I'll be by your side when we're overtaken."

"No, no, you mustn't do that!" Jacob cried sharply. "If only one can get through the work will be done, and I deserve to be overhauled because I sent this beast ahead at such a furious rate when

we first started. Do your best to give them the slip, and pay no attention to me; but when you see Seth again tell him I tried to do as much for the cause as he did."

"I shall stay by you," Enoch said decidedly as he reined in his horse. "They are getting no nearer, and— Look out!"

The warning cry had hardly been uttered when the reports of muskets or pistols rang out once more; but this time the whistling of the bullets could not be heard.

"They have lost ground!" Enoch cried joyfully. "Don't punish your horse so much, but slacken the pace a bit till he gets his wind. We'll best them yet."

Again and again the weapons were discharged, but the boys no longer bent their heads, for they were out of range, and the race was well-nigh won.

Five minutes later the pursuers were lost to view in the distance, and Jacob cried in a tone of relief:

"We've outridden them at last; but if they had held on five minutes longer, it would have been all over, so far as I'm concerned, for I don't believe this beast could have held a trot half a mile more."

"Let him walk awhile, and we'll keep a good lookout in case they should make another try for us. Do you know the roads hereabouts?"

"Yes; all of them. If it was daylight you could see my home from the next hill. There is no short cut hereabouts that they can take to get ahead of us, and we're certain to go through all right!"

CHAPTER VIII.

BARREN HILL.

THE boys now had good reason to believe that the most difficult portion of their work was accomplished.

It was not probable they would meet any of the enemy while riding in this direction, and all that now remained was to find General Lafayette's command.

This last both the boys fancied might be easily done, for Jacob was familiar with the roads in that section of the country, and should be able to lead the way to the camping-place.

The horses would be recovering from the effects of their long race if allowed to continue on at a walk, and such gentle exercise, heated as they were, was better than to bring them to a halt.

"I reckon we've earned our swords," Jacob said, after he was satisfied the enemy had abandoned the pursuit and there was no longer any danger to be apprehended. "It's mighty lucky for us we met that spy on the day of the carnival!"

"I think we'd better finish the work before crowing very loud," Enoch replied with a laugh. "As to whether we are given swords or not troubles

me very little, for I had rather be a private than an officer."

"That's because you don't know how much easier it is to command than be commanded."

"But how is it when a fellow doesn't know how to command?"

"He can soon learn."

"Well, it doesn't seem to me there is any good reason why we should discuss the matter, for the swords haven't been offered us, and perhaps never will be."

"If we don't receive them it'll be because our services are not appreciated. Hark! Do you hear anything?" and Jacob reined his steed to a standstill as he listened intently.

Far up the road, in the direction where the boys supposed the advance of the Continental army was encamped, could be heard the hoof-beats of horses, sounding nearer and nearer each instant.

"They are coming this way!" Master Ludwick said at length. "Do you suppose it is possible our friends have any idea of making an attack on General Howe's forces?"

"They must do that, or be prepared to resist one. Now if ever is the time when our news will be of value."

The boys rode forward confident the approaching travelers were friends, and a few moments later two mounted men could be seen dimly in the gloom, approaching at a quick, but not hurried, pace.

"Hello, friends!" Jacob shouted, guiding his

horse to the middle of the road as if to bar the passage.

The newcomers halted suddenly, and one of them asked in a low tone, speaking to his companion:

"Who have we here? Surely it cannot be that any of the enemy are so far from the city."

"We are friends if you are members of the Continental army," Jacob cried.

"And that is what we are; but why do you take the middle of the road as if to dispute our right to pass?"

"I am the son of Christopher Ludwick, and this fellow with me is Enoch Ball. We have ridden at risk of our lives, having been chased and fired at by a squad of Britishers, to give General Lafayette news of the enemy's movements."

Jacob spoke in an important tone, much as though the sword he dreamed of was already hanging by his side, and had even now assumed a swagger such as he thought essential in an officer of the army.

"We have just come from the general's headquarters, bound for New Jersey; but if your information is of importance it may be to our advantage to turn back. Are the enemy informed of General Lafayette's movements?"

"General Howe knows all about it; the Quaker at whose house the marquis quartered himself sent in the full particulars. From all we could learn, two forces, one of five thousand and the other of two thousand men, have been sent against you."

"Have been sent?" one of the officers repeated. "Do you mean they have already started?"

"I saw more than a thousand in the ranks ready for marching before we came away, and they must have left town about the same time we did."

"But how are you so certain as to the exact number?"

"Enoch heard General Grant talking with one of his staff, and the Britisher said General Howe was so sure of capturing the marquis that he had invited his friends to meet the prisoner at supper to-morrow night."

The two men spoke together in whispers a few seconds, and then he who had acted the part of spokesman asked:

"Are you the boys who were imprisoned on the charge of having aided young Graydon to escape?"

"We are."

"Then there seems to be no question as to the truth of your statement——"

"The truth of it?" Jacob interrupted. "Why, we saw the soldiers ready for the march."

"Will you come with us to General Lafayette?"

"Of course we will! It was to find him that we set out."

The two officers wheeled their steeds, and began to retrace their steps at a rapid pace, the boys following close behind.

After a few moments one of them, half-turning in his saddle, asked how the young messengers had

procured horses, and Jacob readily told him the story of despoiling the Tory.

"You boys have begun well in the service of the cause, and if you continue with the same zeal, should be able to give a good account of yourselves before the struggle is ended."

"That is what we hope to do," Enoch replied, and Jacob whispered to his comrade:

"He didn't say anything about our being given commissions for this night's work."

"And it isn't likely any one else will," Enoch replied with a laugh. "It should be enough for us that we have rendered an important service, and it seems selfish to be talking of a reward even before the work has been done."

"We'll see what General Lafayette thinks about it," and Jacob spoke in a tone of irritation, after which he relapsed into silence, not venturing to speak again until the little party had arrived at an encampment completely surrounding a small farmhouse, before which the officers drew rein.

Sentries were pacing to and fro in front of the building, and the boys understood that they were at General Lafayette's quarters, the owner of which was the person who had sent information to the British commander.

Not until after considerable parley were they admitted to a room strewn with military accouterments, in the center of which stood a table bearing the remnants of a meal.

Here they were forced to wait several moments,

after which a young, not particularly prepossessing-looking man entered, only partially dressed.

The two officers saluted him with evident respect, while Jacob and Enoch showed signs of dissatisfaction.

It did not seem possible to them that this boyish-appearing officer could be the famous Frenchman of whom they had heard so much, and both were sadly disappointed, because, as they believed, an interview with the commander himself was to be denied them.

"This is General Lafayette," one of the officers said to Jacob, "and you can tell him your story."

"This the general?" Master Ludwick cried in amazement.

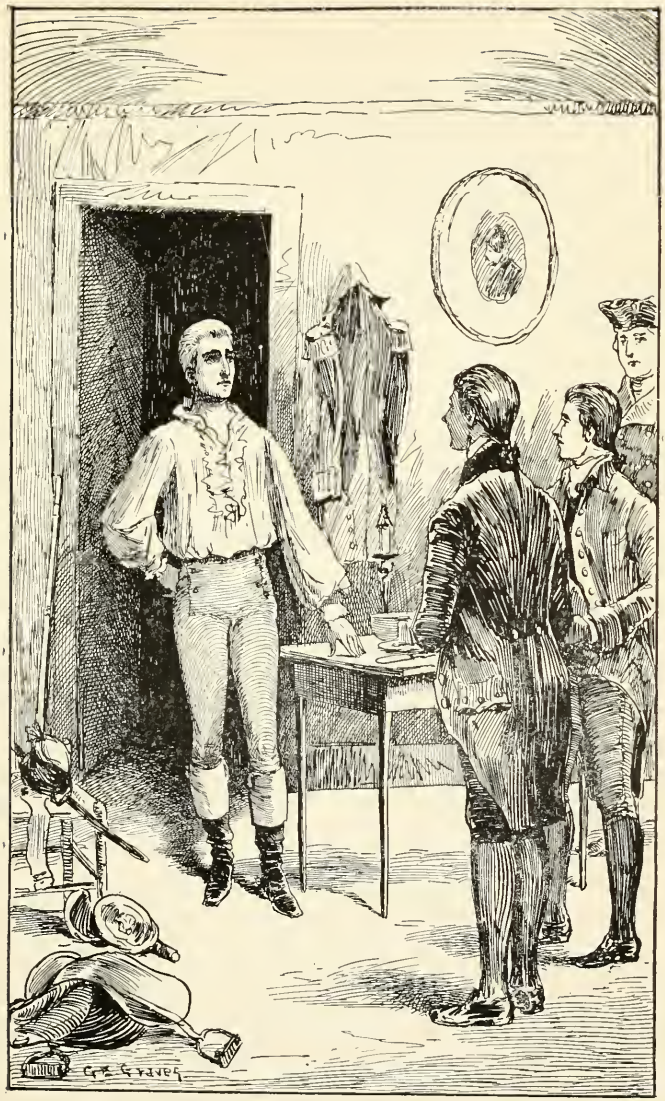
"You expected to see an old man?" Lafayette asked with a smile.

"Well, I didn't think you was—I mean, it didn't seem—I thought you might——"

"Never mind what you thought, my friend. If you have important information to give it will be well if I hear that at once, and your opinion regarding myself can be told at a more convenient season."

Jacob was so thoroughly confused as not to be able to tell a connected story, and it became necessary for Enoch to act as spokesman, a post he filled with great satisfaction to all, except, perhaps, his comrade, who was angry with himself because he had foolishly allowed his surprise to so far overcome him as to tie his tongue.

"So I am to take supper with General and Lord Howe and their friends, am I?" Lafayette said as if



"THIS IS GENERAL LAFAYETTE," ONE OF THE OFFICERS SAID TO JACOB, "AND YOU CAN TELL HIM YOUR STORY."

Washington at Monmouth, p. 118.

to himself when Enoch's story was ended. "With seven thousand men against us the situation may be desperate, but I do not think I shall go to Philadelphia this night."

Then he gave hurried commands to his officers, and when the two left the room he turned to the young messengers with a smile which changed the entire expression of his face, and caused Enoch to believe he had never seen a more kindly gentleman.

"You have done nobly to bring this news, which is most important not only to me personally, but to the cause we all serve. As to the theft of the horses, you need give yourselves no uneasiness. I will send word to Mr. Wharton at the earliest convenient moment, stating that I impressed them into the service of the United States, and forward him an order for the payment of the animals. It will be better you should remain with this command awhile, since it may be dangerous for you to go in either direction alone. Procure from the quartermaster food for yourselves and the beasts, and take such rest as is possible until we make a move."

Enoch understood that the bow with which they were favored was an intimation that the interview had come to an end, and at once went toward the door; but Jacob remained facing the general as if his business was not yet concluded.

"Have you anything more to tell me?" Lafayette asked.

"I thought perhaps you counted on saying something else," Master Ludwick stammered.

"I think we have finished our business. Perhaps at some future time we may have a better opportunity for conversation."

After this Jacob could do no less than follow his companion, and when they were outside the building he said, in a tone of dissatisfaction:

"It don't seem to me that we got much thanks for what we've done."

"What could you want more? We know that perhaps we have been the means of saving this whole command from capture."

"That's exactly what we have done, and yet he didn't say a word about giving us a sword, or even a corporal's commission."

"You expected too much. If General Lafayette is willing to give his services to a people who were strangers to him, he has a right to believe that a couple of boys like us are willing to serve our country without reward."

Jacob was about to make what might have been an angry reply, when he was suddenly seized from behind in what was no unfriendly embrace, as a familiar voice cried:

"I counted on seeing you fellows as soon as you were let out of jail; but didn't think you'd steal up on us in the night. Have you been trying to get an interview with General Lafayette at this hour?"

It was Seth who spoke, and several minutes elapsed before the three boys had so far concluded their greetings as to be able to carry on a coherent conversation.

Then, in obedience to his friend's urging, Seth explained how he had succeeded in reaching the American lines on the night they parted with him on the outskirts of Philadelphia.

It was not such a story as would cause much excitement, owing to the lack of adventure. From the moment he left them until he was at Valley Forge he saw nothing of the enemy. The food provided by Mrs. Ball was ample for all his wants, and the journey which he had believed would be bristling with danger was hardly more than a pleasing excursion.

He had been received with a hearty welcome by the Americans, who, through their spies in Philadelphia, had heard of his dangerous situation, and was allowed to enlist in whatever branch of the service he desired. He enrolled himself in the New Jersey militia, commanded by General Dickinson, because among them were several acquaintances, and had done a soldier's duty from that day.

Jacob expressed considerable surprise that he had not been rewarded in some way because of all he had suffered, and Seth's reply occasioned Master Ludwick no slight amount of astonishment.

"That would have been strange indeed, to reward me for simply trying to do something in aid of the cause."

"But you gave information which must have been valuable to the Americans."

"It was, so I have since been told, and surely such knowledge is sufficient reward."

"I ain't so certain about that," Master Ludwick replied doubtfully. "Now I had an idea that Enoch and I would be made officers at the very least, because of bringing news which may prevent General Lafayette from being made prisoner; but if you haven't got so much as a uniform for all you've been through with, perhaps we shan't fare any better."

Seth laughed long and loud at the idea that Jacob had expected to be made an officer in the Continental army before he had even so much as handled a musket, and said, when his mirth had subsided sufficiently to admit of his speaking:

"After you are in the ranks you'll learn that such rewards as you expected could not well be given, unless the army was to be used as an ornament, instead of for fighting. I suppose of course you will enlist?"

"It looks as if that was all we could do," Enoch replied. "It wouldn't be safe for us to go back to the city, for some one of the squad that pursued us might remember our faces. Yes, the time has come when we should become soldiers, and it seems to be more than ever our duty since we are within the American lines by accident."

"And you will enlist in the regiment to which I belong?"

"It seems as if we should be with the Pennsylvania troops."

"I don't understand that it can make any particular difference, for you will do your duty in one place as well as another."

"Of course we want to be with you," Jacob added thoughtfully, "and if you really believe there's no chance of our being made officers, I suppose we can't do better than join your company."

"Then you may as well sign the rolls at once, for I question if General Lafayette will recommend you for promotion until you know what a private's duty is. Did you see one of our friends in Philadelphia, whom I sent to you?"

"Do you mean a man who was dressed as a farm-hand, and came into the market to sell vegetables?"

"Yes."

"We met him on the day the Britishers had their celebration, or whatever it may be called. Who is he?"

"A member of the company to which I belong; a true patriot, and one who is willing to risk his life over and over again if by so doing he can aid the cause. His name is Robert Greene, and when I heard that he wanted to be directed to several people in the city who might be able to give him information, I told him about you. The fact that the Britishers kept you in jail so long was sufficient evidence you were to be depended upon."

Then Seth insisted that his comrades tell him the story of their troubles after he escaped, but before his curiosity could be fully satisfied the entire camp was aroused.

It was nearly time for the sun to rise, and General Lafayette had begun making preparations to

escape from the trap into which he had voluntarily walked.

Three messengers from different points had come into camp to give notice of the British advance, and the commander knew by this time that Grant's troops were halted at the forks of the roads leading, one to Barren Hill, and the other to Matson's Ford. It was also learned that a considerable number of men had been sent to Chestnut Hill, while Grey with his force of two thousand was at the ford, less than three miles in front of Lafayette's right flank.

Thus it was that the Americans were almost completely surrounded, the only avenue of escape left open being by way of Matson's Ford, the approach to which was very near where Grant had halted his five thousand men.

The older soldiers whom the boys heard discussing the situation were of the opinion that General Lafayette was in a trap from which he could not escape, and, in fact, the majority of the Americans believed they must soon be made prisoners of war, which would be a small disaster as compared to the blow given the American arms before the summer campaign was fairly opened.

"It begins to look as if we had jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire," Jacob said as he stood with his comrades listening to the comments of those around him. "We're likely to go back to Philadelphia sooner than we counted on, and Mr. Wharton will be after us as horse thieves."

"Come with me," Seth suggested. "I do not

believe General Lafayette is in as bad a fix as some try to make out; but if he is, it will be better for you to be captured with muskets in your hands, rather than as fellows who came here solely to bring information of the enemy's movements."

"How can we do that while we have the horses? I don't propose to give them up unless we're forced to, and that is what would happen if we followed you."

There was no longer time for Seth to discuss the matter with his friends. The drums were beating the call for the men to "fall in," and he was forced to take his proper station in the line.

While Jacob hesitated, and Enoch was doing his best to persuade him that it would be wisest to leave the horses to their fate, the booming of heavy guns close at hand startled the boys, and Master Ludwick was looking anxiously around for some convenient way of escape, believing the British close upon them, when one of the officers they had stopped on the road came up.

"You look frightened," he said laughingly.

"That's just what I am," Jacob replied grimly. "I don't want to be taken back to the city as a horse thief, and it now seems as if that was what is about to be done."

"There is no cause for fear yet awhile. Those cannon are being served by our men, and I allow they will deceive the Britishers, even though no great execution follows."

"But it sounds like a regular battle."

"I admit that, my boy; but unless I am mistaken we shan't see anything in the way of an engagement this morning."

"Do you think General Lafayette will——"

"Have patience and you shall see what is to be done. The troops will soon begin to move toward Matson's Ford, and you two had better make your way in that direction at once."

"But some of the soldiers said the Britishers were very near there."

"So they are; but I fancy we can prevent them from knowing what is being done until our troops are in a place of safety, for, as a matter of course, there can be no question of pitting twenty-five hundred men against more than seven thousand. Take my advice, and get to the ford as soon as possible."

Enoch insisted that their wisest course was to act upon the officer's suggestion, and although Jacob appeared to think he should receive personal orders from General Lafayette regarding himself, he finally did as his comrade desired, and, mounted on Mr. Wharton's horses, they followed the main body of the troops.

Not until after the movement had been successfully executed, and all the men and baggage withdrawn to a place of safety, did the boys understand how it was done. Then the maneuver was explained to them by a soldier whose acquaintance they made during that day.

"Lafayette proved himself adequate to the occasion. In a moment, as it were, his dangers were revealed, and the one possible means of extrication resorted to. Dispositions were made in the churchyard as though to receive Grey; his artillery, by a well-directed fire, encouraged the idea that he purposed to engage. His real aim was, of course, flight, and by the ford; but to attain it he must pass within a short distance of Grant, who was nearer to it than himself. He feigned movements as though for an attack, and by an occasional display of the heads of columns he for a time persuaded the Englishman that an action was imminent. Meantime the troops, as fast as they could come up, were hurrying across the ford, until at last the artillery and a body of Oneida savages only remained on this side the stream. These were also now brought over, and on the high ground beyond our men were secure. Grant at last came up, and ordered the advance to move on, but too late. They saw but a party of our troops dotting the surface of the water like the floats of a seine. The prey had escaped. Grant was hopelessly in the rear; and when Grey's column closed in there was nothing between the British lines. The only skirmishing even that seems to have occurred was between a body of light-horse and the Oneidas. Neither had ever encountered a like foe; and when the cavalry unexpectedly rode among the savages, the whooping and scampering of the one, and the flashing swords

and curveting steeds of the other party, excited such a common terror that both fled with the utmost precipitation. Irritated and empty-handed Howe marched back to town, with no one but his own officers to blame for his ill-success."*

* Winthrop Sargent's "Life of John Andre."

CHAPTER IX.

ROBERT GREENE.

DURING the retreat to Valley Forge Jacob and Enoch did not see Seth, who, as a matter of course, remained with his regiment.

The two boys who had brought the earliest information regarding General Howe's movements rode the horses taken from the Tory, and, therefore, were not inconvenienced by the forced march; but they had good opportunity of learning something concerning a private soldier's duties and labors which they had never realized before.

"Now you can see that I wasn't such a very big fool because I wanted to be an officer," Jacob said as they neared the encampment at Valley Forge. "Look at the privates staggering under a load big enough for a horse, while those who have commissions ride or walk at their leisure, with nothing to carry but a sword."

"I didn't laugh at you for *wanting* to be an officer, but because you seemed to think it would be easy to perform the duties of one."

"I'm not certain that I shall enlist unless General Lafayette gives us a better show than the rest have got."

Enoch looked at him in astonishment.

"Do you mean that you hesitate to become a soldier now we are where it is possible to enlist?"

"That's it exactly. If nothing turns up in our favor, I shall think twice before signing the rolls," Jacob replied with an air of complacency, much as if he believed his enlisting would be of the most vital importance to the cause.

"What will your father say when he learns that you do not care to be a soldier? He must be here at Valley Forge, and most likely we shall soon see him."

"When father knows that we are given the cold shoulder after doing the work we did last night he will think as I do."

"I shall join the company of which Seth is a member, and you had better do the same thing. Of course we can't stay here in the encampment unless we enlist."

"Don't be in too much of a hurry to tie yourself down; but wait until I have seen father."

Enoch would have much preferred to enroll himself as a private in the Continental army without delay; but Jacob urged him so strongly to wait at least twenty-four hours that he could not refuse without giving offense to his comrade.

"What are we to do?" he asked as they rode into the encampment in advance of the retreating force, being allowed to enter the lines after explaining who they were, and why they had come.

"You stay near here, while I look for father. He

will find us a place in which to sleep to-night, and supply us with food."

"Shall you be gone long?"

"It doesn't seem likely; but you must stay near here, for I should never find you if you strayed away. I had no idea there were so many men in the Continental camp."

"Did you think the army would be composed of Seth, you, and I, and all three of us holding commissions because by chance we did our duty?"

"Perhaps you won't make sport of me to-morrow at this time, and it may be you'll learn that I wasn't very far wrong when I said we should be rewarded for our services."

"We won't discuss that matter again," Enoch replied laughingly, "otherwise you may not find your father to-day. Don't be gone any longer than necessary, for it won't be particularly jolly standing around here holding a horse that ought to have his breakfast."

"I'll be back as soon as I can," Jacob cried as he rode away, and Enoch turned his attention to the returning troops, finding much to interest him as the different regiments marched into the encampment, filing to the right or the left to occupy their old quarters.

He saw Seth as the latter's company came up among the last, and, but for his promise to Jacob, would have followed in order to learn where his friend might be found later.

Finally the last of the soldiers arrived; the camp

resumed its wonted air, much as though twenty-five hundred men had not marched out full of hope, and come back again dispirited, if not disheartened.

One, two, three hours passed, and Jacob was yet absent.

Enoch had about decided to leave his unprofitable station, regardless of the trouble it might cause Master Ludwick to find him, and seek out Seth, when he was accosted by a soldier whose face looked familiar, but whose identity he could not recall.

"So you got into the Continental camp sooner than you expected, eh? It was a good bit of work you did, but, save for the urgency of the case, I could wish you had never left town."

"It seems to me I have met you before; but I can't remember where," and Enoch looked at the man scrutinizingly.

"It isn't strange you should fail to know me in this garb; I was dressed as a farmer when you saw me last."

"You are the one who talked with us on the day of the carnival!"

"Exactly, and now perhaps you can understand why I am sorry because it became necessary for you to leave town."

"Yet we couldn't do very much toward helping you in your work."

"What you have done since last evening shows of how much assistance you might be. Two boys can loiter here or there without exciting the suspicion

which would naturally be aroused if a man was observed doing the same thing."

"I can't say I'm sorry we came away. It seemed necessary we should do so——"

"And so it was, my boy. You did just right in getting to Barren Hill at the earliest possible moment."

"It was Jacob's idea. I do not believe I should have thought of getting the horses but for him, and he planned the whole affair."

"Yet he is dissatisfied because General Lafayette did not embrace and kiss him on both cheeks, at the same time making him at least a colonel, isn't he?"

Enoch laughed heartily, and finally asked curiously:

"How did you know anything about that?"

"It comes natural for me to pry into every one's business, and it may be I heard you two talking, or read it in Master Ludwick's face. But why is it you do not expect a rich reward?"

"Because we have simply performed our duty, and when that is done in behalf of the cause one is rewarded by the knowledge that he has been of some service."

"It would be better for the cause if more were of your way of thinking," Greene said in a low tone, and added quickly, "What do you propose to do now?"

"Enlist."

"In what branch of the service?"

"I would like to be with Seth Graydon, and, if possible, shall join his company."

"What does Master Ludwick say to that plan?"

"He has gone to consult with his father, and I am waiting here for his return."

"If he finds old Chris, and complains because he has not been rewarded, I predict that he will come back with a sore body, for our baker-general is a true-blooded American even though he was born in Germany, and will not have any patience with such ideas as his son entertains. Tell me, Enoch Ball, would you be willing to serve your country in another way than by becoming a soldier?"

"I would do anything in my power."

"Now more than ever is it necessary we should know all that is being done in Philadelphia. Clinton is soon to take command of the British army, and no one can guess what his policy will be. It would not be safe for Seth Graydon to volunteer for such work, because the Britishers would hang him off-hand if he ever fell into their clutches; I'm not certain I could trust Master Ludwick implicitly, but I would like you for a comrade."

"But I am known in town."

"Not to so many that it would interfere with your doing all that might be required. If you should return home at once—this very day—it would not be difficult to persuade suspicious ones that you had never left the city."

Enoch was almost frightened by the proposition. He understood how much danger would be attached

to such work, and fancied the enemy knew perfectly well who had carried the first information to General Lafayette; but yet he replied in as firm a tone as he could assume:

"I am ready to do anything, or go anywhere that is best for the cause."

"It is bravely spoken, my boy. Do not fear that the enemy are looking for you; I question very much if General Howe or his officers have the slightest idea that any information was carried to General Lafayette, save by the country people who saw the forces on the march. Will you be ready to go back with me this evening?"

"Yes; I only want to see Seth and Jacob a moment, and it is not really necessary I should do even that, for I could leave word I would soon come back."

"There is no reason why you shouldn't wait till Master Ludwick returns, and then I will show you where Seth's regiment is encamped."

Greene seated himself on the ground as if perfectly willing to remain there any length of time, and after tying the horse's bridle to the wheel of a cannon Enoch sat down beside the spy.

"How long have you been doing this kind of work?" he asked.

"Playing the spy, do you mean? I began last fall, when our army went into winter-quarters. There was some fear then that General Howe might take a notion to stir our folks up at a time when they were having about all they could do to keep

body and soul together, without thinking of fighting, and I volunteered for the work. It seemed dangerous at first, as it now does to you; but I soon got over that idea, and grew to like the task."

"You would be hanged if captured?"

"True, and it is not a pleasant way of going out of the world; but I am in no more danger of death than if I went into a battle, and some one must do the work."

"Yet Seth was captured the very first time he tried to give our friends information."

"That may be accounted for by the fact that he was not a spy; if he had been he would never have allowed the Continentals to escort him where he might be seen by the enemy. A man engaged in such business does not take any unnecessary chances, and is always on the alert lest his true character be discovered. That which I propose you shall do, however, is not as dangerous as it now appears, and I am positive you will not dislike it. Tell me, have you seen nothing since you met the army to dispel the supposed charm of a soldier's life?"

"I never thought there could be any sport in being a soldier, and what I have seen is only such as I have believed was the fact. Why is it that I have not met more officers?"

"Perhaps because Lafayette's advance was not considered an important movement, and, therefore, he had only his own staff with him. You would see plenty of generals by staying here a few days,

and some of them as useless as they are gaudy in dress."

"It seems that you are not friendly with all of them," Enoch said with a smile.

"I am only a private, therefore could not be on intimate terms with the most humble of them; but I have seen very much, and heard more, since I began to play the spy, that shakes my faith in some of the officers under General Washington, and the one I most distrust is he who is next in rank to the commander-in-chief."

"What do you mean?" and now Enoch's curiosity was excited.

"Hark ye, lad, it is not for me to speak against my superior officer, whether he be a captain or a general, but if you and I are to work together you should know it, for I want you to keep your ears open very wide whenever his name is mentioned, particularly by those who are enemies to the cause. He it is that I fear more than I do Howe or Clinton."

"What is his name?"

Greene bent forward that he might whisper in his comrade's ear:

"Charles Lee, senior major-general under our Washington."

"I have heard of him."

"Where?" the spy asked eagerly, as if believing he might hear something to still further confirm his suspicions.

"I can't say; but perhaps it was no more than

the mention of his name as one of General Washington's officers. Tell me about him."

"As I said before, it does not become a soldier to speak ill of his superior officer; but you shall hear what the world knows about General Lee. He was formerly in the British army, and served under Burgoyne in Portugal, where he was made lieutenant-colonel. He was with Braddock when that officer was defeated on the banks of the Monongahela, and with Abercrombie at Ticonderoga. After that he lived for some time with the Mohawk Indians, and was such a restless, jealous, quarrelsome man that they gave him the name 'Boiling Water.' He left the king's service, and came over here in '73, claiming to be in sympathy with the colonists, and succeeding so well in his pretensions, or his faith, whichever you choose to call it, that when the Continental army was organized he received a commission as major-general. That didn't satisfy him, patriot though he claimed to be, and he demanded that Congress make good to him any loss he might sustain by reason of having given up his commission with the British army. In '76 Congress loaned him thirty thousand dollars, without any security other than his own name on a bond."

"He got a good price for his services. Why, even General Washington himself hasn't been given that much!"

"No, nor any part of it, outside of his pay. Now what has Lee done for the cause? When General Washington was pursued across New Jersey in '76

by Cornwallis, Lee followed with a heavy force; but although called upon again and again by the commander-in-chief to strike a blow at the pursuers, he refused to obey—or neglected to do so, which amounts to the same thing."

"Why?"

"Perhaps because he hoped some disaster would befall General Washington, and he be given command of the army. Then, long after Cornwallis gave up the chase, Lee hung around New Jersey until he found a chance—that's the way I put it—found a chance to be captured by a small British scouting party, and was taken prisoner to New York. He was soon hand in glove with General Howe and his officers, and there are many of our people who say he told all he knew regarding our condition and plans. Then came the farce of exchanging him for some officer we had captured, and only two weeks or less ago he showed his cloven foot again, according to my way of thinking."

"In what way?"

"The Congress ordered that the oath of allegiance be administered to the officers here at Valley Forge before the beginning of the campaign, and Lee was forced to come up with the others. When he and two or three more had their hands on the Bible, he took his off when General Washington began to read the oath. The commander waited for him to put his hand back, and he withdrew it again before the words could be read. Then General Washing-

ton asked what he meant, and he said—these are the very words as they were told me by one who was there—'As to King George I am ready enough to absolve myself from all allegiance to him, but I have some scruples about the Prince of Wales.'"

"What did he mean by that?"

"According to my idea it was only an excuse to get out of taking the oath, but those present seemed to think it only one of his odd traits, and passed it over as something not to be remembered. I bear it in mind, though, and want you to do the same if you are ever where it is possible to learn anything regarding him."

"But it isn't the duty of a private to watch his superior officers," Enoch ventured to suggest.

"It is in this case, for I look on General Charles Lee as a man who can, and will, if he gets the chance, do more against the cause than even Howe himself."

Enoch was impressed by what Greene had told him; but he did not believe it could ever be possible for him to detect an officer, second in rank only to the commander-in-chief, in treasonable practices. Besides, it appeared to him a very disgraceful duty to impose upon a boy who was not yet a soldier, and, perhaps, would have remonstrated, but that Jacob appeared just at that moment.

Master Ludwick was not looking particularly cheerful, and Greene whispered as he approached:

"I'll venture to say that old Chris the baker has been giving his son a lesson on the patriotic idea of

expecting a rich reward whenever he chances to be of service to the cause. Old Chris isn't that sort of a man."

It seemed very much as if the spy was correct in his guess, for Jacob had nothing more to say against enlisting, but appeared anxious to know when Enoch proposed to sign the rolls.

"Have you decided to do so?"

"Yes," was the curt reply.

"To-night?"

"If I don't there won't be much chance of getting rations."

"But I thought you counted on staying with your father?"

"I have changed my mind," Jacob replied as if the subject was not a pleasant one.

"What have you done with your horse?"

"Father thought he ought to be turned over to the army, and then I couldn't be accused of stealing him for my own benefit."

"I reckon I'd better do the same thing," Enoch said, trying not to smile when Greene indulged in an expressive wink. "Where can it be done?"

"I'll show you the ropes, or, what is better, do the business for you," the spy replied. "I reckon you want to see Seth Graydon a spell before we leave?"

"That is what I would like to do."

"Go in that direction," and Greene pointed to the right, "until you have passed a lot of cannon; then turn to the left, and you'll be in the midst of

the Jersey boys. I shall find you there, and we'll call on General Dickinson before starting."

"What did he mean?" Jacob asked as the spy walked away with Mr. Wharton's steed. "Are you counting on going anywhere?"

Enoch explained to his comrade what it was Greene had proposed, and concluded by saying:

"We'll have a talk with Seth. If he thinks I can really be of as much service in the city as here, I shall go."

"And I'll be with you! This enlisting ain't what I've always thought it was, and if I can get out of camp without father's knowing it, I'll be all right."

"Without his knowing it? Do you think he would object to your going back?"

"I don't *think* anything about it, 'cause I know. There's no need of telling any one else, Enoch, but he raised an awful row when I talked about being an officer, and when I said I guessed I wouldn't enlist he flew into a terrible rage. He acted as if it would just suit him for me to be marched out somewhere and shot at."

It was with difficulty Enoch could refrain from laughing at the disconsolate expression on Jacob's face; but he succeeded in checking his mirth sufficiently to say in a sympathetic tone:

"Of course he doesn't want you shot, Jacob; but you must remember how much your father has done for the cause, and I suppose it made him angry when you spoke of being paid for the little we did last night."

"Made him angry? Why, he flew way off, an' I thought one spell that he was going to flog me. If I can get away when you do, it'll be all right."

"I have been told that it isn't possible to walk out of a military camp whenever you choose. You must have a pass, or something of that kind."

"We didn't have any trouble to get in here."

"Not after we told who we were and that we intended to enlist."

"You said that; I didn't."

"Yes; but you came in, and I don't think it will be very easy to get out again unless your father knows you are going."

"Then I shall stay here as long as I live, except that fellow Greene would be willing to say I could do a deal of good in the city. Will you ask him?"

Enoch promised to do as his friend wished, but at the same time he did not believe the spy would be very eager for this addition to the party.

The boys had been walking during the conversation, and by the time it was concluded they had passed the artillery park, arriving at that portion of the encampment where the New Jersey troops were quartered.

Seth was on the lookout for them, and the warmth of his greeting was particularly pleasing to Master Ludwick, who felt decidedly sore in mind.

CHAPTER X.

CONCILIATORY BILLS.

THAT Seth was proud of being an officer in the Continental army both Jacob and Enoch understood during the first hour spent in his company. The fact was clearly apparent in his manner of showing them around the encampment, explaining the location of the different troops, the routine of a soldier's life, and displaying his proficiency in the manual of arms.

"I never had an idea that there was so much to be learned before a fellow could make any show as a soldier," he said when, the exhibition drill being ended, he led the two boys to his quarters. "It seemed to me only necessary to stand in line, or be able to load a musket; but that is a very small portion of the work."

"I suppose you know it all by this time," Jacob said in an envious tone.

"Indeed I don't. I have only just begun to learn; but if I'm not a good soldier within a year, it will be because peace is declared too soon, or I have been wounded or killed. The members of our company are well trained, and seem willing to help me along."

"If I couldn't find out all there was for a private to know in a week, I'd give up trying," Master Ludwick declared emphatically.

"Then you may as well never try."

"I'm not certain that I shall."

"What?" and Seth looked thoroughly astonished. "I thought your greatest desire was to enlist?"

"I've changed my mind about that since last night."

"Since last night? Why, after what you two have done it seems as if the only thing left was to enlist. You surely can't go back to Philadelphia——"

"That isn't so certain. Enoch is going with Greene, the spy, and if I can give father the slip I shall travel in his company."

As a matter of course Seth was eager to understand what Master Ludwick meant, and in the fewest possible words Enoch explained the proposition that had been made to him.

"I suppose of course it's your duty to go if you can be of any service," Seth said slowly; "but I have counted so much on having you and Jacob for comrades that it will be a big disappointment. It is too bad for you not to be members of the army now when it seems as if the end of the struggle was close at hand."

"What has happened to make you think anything of that kind is near?" Enoch asked in surprise. "Philadelphia is still in the possession of the British; General Washington has not moved from these his winter-quarters, and at the very beginning of the

campaign General Lafayette has been forced to retreat."

"But the alliance will make a great difference. Now that we are to have the assistance of the French troops——"

"What do you mean?" and both Enoch and Jacob looked bewildered.

"Haven't you heard that the French king has acknowledged the independence of the United States, and declares that he will befriend us?"

"I knew last winter it was hoped such might be the case, but don't understand that anything has been effected toward that end as yet."

"Then General Howe has succeeded in keeping the news from our people better than I supposed possible. You should have been in camp here from the third to the seventh of this month, and then you would have understood what hopes every one is building upon the alliance. It was announced to the army on the third, and on the seventh the soldiers celebrated the good news."

"I wish our friends in Philadelphia could know of it," Enoch said, half to himself.

"They will know before a great while, that you may depend upon. It is rumored here that war is to be declared between France and England, and that what are called 'conciliatory bills' have been offered in Parliament."

"What do you mean by conciliatory bills?" Enoch asked in perplexity.

"As it has been explained to me, the British government will make peace with the colonies——"

"That is what the king will try to do," a voice cried, and, looking up, the boys saw Greene, the spy, who had approached near enough to overhear a portion of the conversation without having been seen. "Nothing short of our independence will, I hope, please our leaders. The bills you speak of are merely deceptionary measures, so General Washington says. The king will give us a little more liberty than we have had; but doesn't propose to allow us to become a nation by ourselves. You don't seem to be aware of how well we are progressing, Enoch, my boy. The French king has declared himself our friend; there is no question but that war will soon be proclaimed between France and England, and what more particularly concerns you is, that the British are making preparations to evacuate Philadelphia."

Enoch and Jacob looked at the speaker in surprise which bordered on bewilderment.

"Do you mean that General Howe will march out of the city when there is no necessity of his doing so?"

"He will unquestionably march out very shortly; but there is good reason for the move. He has accomplished nothing by remaining there, and fears he may find himself in trouble. Four days before the carnival Howe issued an order for the heavy baggage of the army to be prepared for embarkation at the shortest notice, and for the soldiers to lighten their personal luggage. If that doesn't mean that the Britishers are getting ready

for some kind of a move I'm very much mistaken. There is yet more news for you, boys. It is evidently a fact that peace commissioners have been appointed by the king, and are now on their way to this country."

"Can that be possible?" Enoch asked, and Seth nodded his head triumphantly as he replied:

"You should have been here at Valley Forge to learn the news, not in the city where the Britishers suppress everything that isn't pleasing. There can be no question about the commissioners, as Mr. Greene says, for it is reported in the army that Washington wrote to Congress regarding the conciliatory bills and the fact that the commissioners are coming to this country, saying in the letter: 'Nothing short of independence, it appears to me, will do. A peace on any other terms would, if I may be allowed the expression, be a peace of war.' You can see we are progressing famously, and that the time is come when the king realizes how nearly we have gained our independence."

"Then if I go to the city with Mr. Greene I may be fortunate enough to see the Britishers marching out?"

"Who can say but that you will be the first to bring the news to this army that the capital of our country is no longer in possession of the enemy?" the spy added in a triumphant tone. "Now, I fancy, Master Ball, you will have no hesitation about doing as I wish?"

"I am ready to go whenever you say the word."

"Then it is time we were making a move. General Dickinson wants to have a word with you before we go, and I propose to set out as soon as your interview is ended."

"What about my going too?" Jacob asked eagerly. "Surely I have been able to do as much as Enoch — perhaps more, for he is willing to confess that but for me he would never have known where to get horses for last night's ride."

"That matter is already settled, Master Ludwick," Greene replied with just a suspicion of a smile. "I committed to your father's care the horse Enoch rode, for it would have cost me too much time to have turned him over to the quartermaster in due form, and then promised that I would not countenance your leaving camp."

"So my father had an idea I would want to go?"

"Yes, when he learned I was to take Enoch."

"He may think he can keep me here; but I doubt it," Master Ludwick said sharply. "It will be necessary for him to watch me very closely, because it doesn't appear to be such a hard matter to give him the slip."

"You may think differently after making the attempt. Do you fancy the men here are allowed to roam about at will?"

"I reckon I shouldn't have much trouble in getting away if I tried hard."

"You will soon learn to the contrary, if you make the attempt. At all events I am bound by my promise not to allow you to accompany Enoch

and I. Seth, if you want to send any word to your mother we may have an opportunity of speaking with her before many days."

"If Enoch sees her he knows what I would say. I am more than contented, for I am happy at being a soldier at last, and hope before this campaign ends I shall have done that which will prove I am true to the cause."

Greene was not disposed to make any further delay.

His instructions were to be in Philadelphia before the following morning, and since at least half of the journey must be made on foot, there was no more than sufficient time remaining to accomplish his purpose.

Seth and Jacob accompanied Enoch to General Dickinson's quarters, and waited outside until his interview with the commander of the New Jersey militia was at an end.

"What did he say to you?" Master Ludwick asked when Enoch finally emerged from the building.

"Nothing of much importance that I am at liberty to repeat," Enoch replied guardedly. "He thanked you and I for what we did last night——"

"I should think it was about time somebody thanked us," Jacob grumbled.

"Surely General Lafayette spoke very kindly."

"Yes; but that is all he did do."

"Well, General Dickinson didn't say very much

more, and surely our night's work wasn't so dangerous after all."

"Weren't we chased and fired at?"

"Yes; but not hit."

"Then I suppose if we had been killed they would have thought we had done something wonderful," Jacob grumbled.

Enoch did not care to enter into any argument with his friend concerning a matter which, in his opinion, had already been fully discussed, and put an end to the conversation by extending his hands to his comrades as he said:

"Good-by, fellows! If nothing happens to me, and the Britishers do leave Philadelphia, you'll see me precious soon after they have gone."

"Try mighty hard to be the first to bring us the news," Seth said in a cheery tone as he pressed Enoch's hand warmly, and Jacob added:

"You two fellows seem to be having all the luck, even though I am the one who does most of the work."

"You get just as much luck as any of us," Enoch replied, "and perhaps more than Seth did, for he had to walk all the way to Valley Forge, and you rode. Now you have a good opportunity to enlist, and I hope you will do so instead of moping because matters are not exactly to your liking."

Then Master Ball, motioning to Green that he was ready for the journey, set off down the path which led to the main road.

"That boy of Ludwick's has got something in

him if he would only give it a fair chance to come out," the spy said when they were a short distance away. "The trouble with him is that he made up his mind he had done a wonderful thing in bringing information of the enemy's movements last night, and counted so surely on being given a commission as a reward that it has unfitted him for ordinary duties."

"Jacob means well at heart."

"I believe you, lad—that is to say, he did up to last night, but that little affair seems to have spoiled him entirely."

"He will soon get over it, and by the time we come back, if we ever do, he will be in a fair way to become as good a soldier as Seth appears to be."

"Don't make the mistake, lad, of questioning whether we are ever coming back. I grant you the work we're on is dangerous; but the chances of our being captured are not as great as the possibility of our being killed if we were going into battle. To anticipate danger is, to my mind, a good bit like inviting it, and the man who expects to be shot has given himself a deal of unnecessary worriment, if it so chances he comes out of the engagement unscratched. If, when we get to work, you are constantly thinking your arrest as a spy is certain to happen, you won't be so keen on the scent of news as you would if the venture was, to your mind nothing more than a pleasant excursion."

"I suppose you think I am frightened. Well, I

am; but that won't interfere with my doing all you require."

"I don't believe it will, lad. You have got the right kind of pluck, and I am counting on your distinguishing yourself between now and the time the Britishers leave Philadelphia. Here are our horses, and this time you are riding a nag belonging to the Colonies; not one you have been obliged to impress."

"I thought we would be forced to walk!"

"We shall ride as far as it is safe to do so, and stop at the farm where I am supposed to be working. The man who owns it is a true friend to the cause, and through him I am enabled to do very much more than would otherwise be possible, for he supplies me with all the vegetables I can sell. It isn't such a bad idea for him either, for he gets the money at the same time he is serving his country, and the market-stoppers never trouble me."

"What do you intend I shall do in town?"

"First of all, simply go home, providing we arrive there so early in the morning that you can get in without being seen. If your mother reports that the Britishers have been looking for you, leave town immediately, and make your way back to the farm without giving any heed to me. In such case I shall be deprived of your services, for we cannot keep you here if you are under suspicion. Should it chance, however, as I anticipate, that you are not known to have done more than aid Seth Graydon's escape, you will simply loiter around the city as you

have been doing, meeting me in the market-place when you have anything to report, and, in case of important news, such as you learned last night, make your way to the farm at the earliest posssible moment."

"You spoke to Seth of the chance that I might see his mother?"

"Yes, there is no reason why you should not go there, if matters are as I suppose, In fact, Enoch, you will do exactly as you have been doing, and with the assurance that I shall be on the alert in case any danger threatens."

Greene spoke of the duties to be performed in such a matter-of-fact tone, treating the business as if it it was nothing out of the ordinary, that long before they arrived at the place where the horses were to be left all sense of peril which had hung over Enoch was dispelled, and he felt confident of being able to successfully perform the work required of him.

Not until nightfall was the first stage of the journey ended, when the two partook of an appetizing meal, rested an hour, and then set their faces cityward, each carrying on his back a small assortment of vegetables.

"We shall be there a good while before morning," Enoch suggested when the long tramp was begun.

"I count on arriving shortly after midnight."

"But you can't go to the market-place until sunrise."

"Neither do I want to do so, my boy. I shall have an excuse for loitering around town, and you may rest assured I don't waste my time during the hours of apparent idleness."

"I should think the Britishers would be suspicious of your getting into town at midnight."

"Bless you, lad, I've done the same thing for the past three months, and been stopped by the patrol so many times that now they all know me. It no longer excites surprise because I am so particularly attentive to my business. My explanation is that I get a better price for the marketing if I am first upon the ground."

As the journey progressed the miles seemed to Enoch to have doubled in length, and the burden on his back increased tenfold in weight; but he toiled manfully forward, repressing, so far as possible, every evidence of fatigue lest the spy should think him one easily discouraged.

As they neared their destination there was less inclination for conversation, and when half an hour had passed in silence Greene said in a cheery tone:

"Your friend Seth, with all his marching and counter-marching, shouldering and carrying arms, isn't forced to work as hard as you have been doing this night, lad."

"But I am not grumbling."

"I am well aware of that, my boy, and proud of the fact, for it shows I wasn't mistaken in my estimate of you. I know you are tired, though, for I am, and I have been over this road in the same fashion nigh

on to a hundred times. It is the hardest kind of hard work; but there's a big satisfaction in doing it, for we know that it insures our safety when we are among the Britishers."

"Suppose you should meet any of the enemy who had seen me when I was in jail with Jacob? Wouldn't it cast suspicion on you?"

"Not a bit of it, lad, for I am ready in case that happens, and it wouldn't be strange if something of the kind should occur. Here is the story: You found it necessary to go to work in order to help support your mother, because in these days I don't fancy she has as many scholars, either in French or dancing, as a month ago, when times even with the enemy were more prosperous. I have hired you to help me bring in my goods."

"But doesn't it seem strange that you shouldn't come in with a wagon?"

"Not a bit of it, and for this reason: The Americans might seize my horse, and pay for it with an order on Congress, or the British might do the same thing and give me English gold. In either case I should be the loser, if I was really what I represent myself, for horses can't be purchased readily even though one is willing to pay a big price, and that fact is well known. Only those farmers living near the town, and who are assured of General Howe's protection because of their Tory sentiments, venture with their beasts where it is so easy to lose them."

It was half an hour past midnight when they had

arrived opposite the Carpenter mansion, and there, to Enoch's alarm, they were halted by a patrol.

"It's only me, cap'n," Greene said when the command to halt was given.

"You still believe in the luck of being first at the market-place, Daniel," the sergeant in command of the squad said with a laugh.

"And it is luck, cap'n. I haven't missed of sellin' all I've brought a single day since you Britishers come here."

"And you think that wouldn't be the case if some one got in ahead of you?"

"It mightn't be."

"But there are plenty who don't arrive until daylight, and yet sell all their wares."

"I allow that's a fact, cap'n dear; but who gets the best price? The early bird like me what can afford to haggle for an extra sixpence, or them as have only time enough to sell out and get home before dark?"

"There may be some truth in that, my man; you appear to be a rare one for driving bargains. But who is this with you?"

"A city-bred lad what has found out at last that he's got a livin' to earn. He's the son of the Widow Ball on Letitia Street—she's an old customer of mine. I sold her enough potatoes for winter early in the fall, and got the money before I brought 'em in."

"You are not wise in your choice of an assistant,

Daniel," the sergeant said in an admonitory tone. "Young Ball isn't looked upon as an honest lad."

"What do you mean by that?" and the alleged farmer gave evidence of the liveliest alarm. "His mother told me he wouldn't take a pin's worth that didn't belong to him."

"All of which may be true; but certain it is that he has been suspected of having an affection for the rebels, and it isn't many days since he came out of jail, where he was held on suspicion of having aided a spy to escape."

"Oh, is that all you've got agin him? I allowed from the way you began it was something serious."

"And don't you call acting the rebel a serious matter?"

"Not in a boy like him, cap'n. It's a way all young chaps have. They think it's a sign of smartness to side with the under dog in the fight; but after a few hard knocks that is thumped out of 'em, an' this one is as loyal to the king as I am."

"It won't do any harm to keep your eye on him, at all events, Daniel, for if he should indulge in more disagreeable practices he might get not only himself, but you, into trouble."

"I reckon hard work will take all that out of him, and after he's tramped in here a dozen times he'll be glad to stay at home instead of cavorting 'round with the rebels, though I should be the last to say anything agin 'em."

"What do you mean by that?" the sergeant asked sternly.

"Why, ain't they doing me a mighty good turn, cap'n? If it wasn't for them all you Britishers wouldn't be here, and I should have to take less than half-price for my truck, and trust the biggest part out at that."

"Oh, I see," the sergeant replied laughingly as he ordered his men to move on. "It's the pounds, shillings and pence that touch you more deeply than anything else. Good-night to you, Daniel. Don't charge more than three prices for your truck, and see to it that your assistant behaves himself."

"It is evident there has been no very great hue and cry over you and Jacob since yesterday afternoon," Greene said in a whisper as the patrol passed on in advance, "otherwise the sergeant would have known it. There's nothing now to prevent our carrying out the plan as I had allowed. Keep your eyes open, lad, and don't stay in the house a single minute after daylight."

CHAPTER XI.

A RECOGNITION.

Enoch soon learned that the most difficult task which confronted him in his new line of work was to persuade his mother he was not exposed to any more danger than he would be on the battlefield.

She, remembering Seth's capture and narrow escape from the scaffold, insisted her son should refuse to assist Greene the spy in any way. She was willing for Enoch to enlist; but objected most strenuously to his doing that which, if discovered, would doom him to a disgraceful death.

During the first two hours spent at home the boy used every argument to convince her he would not be in any greater danger than he had been since his release from jail, and not until he had begged she would consent to his carrying on the work "because he had promised, and would be ashamed to go back to camp with the excuse that his mother would not allow him to do anything of the kind," did she give an unwilling consent to the proposition.

"I shall live in constant terror of hearing that you have been arrested and sentenced to be hanged," she said finally; "but will try to hide such fears because you have given your word to cease playing the

spy as soon as you can honorably leave the work and enter the army."

Enoch was more than willing to agree to this; he preferred to serve his country in any other way than that which he had just begun, and would welcome the time when he could stand boldly before his friends and acquaintances as a Continental soldier.

Agreeably to the promise made Green, he was on the street as soon as daylight, and during the entire day lounged around the city, listening eagerly for scraps of important conversation whenever he passed a group of men; but hearing nothing which might benefit his friends.

Late in the afternoon he succeeded in gaining an interview with Seth's mother, and, by approaching the house from the rear, had been able to gain access to the premises without being seen by any one save her.

As a matter of course she was greatly rejoiced at learning that her son was safe and happy, but during the past few weeks she was not unduly anxious concerning him, for Lord Gordon assured her that since the boy had not been brought back to Philadelphia he was unquestionably with the Continental army.

"It hardly seems as if Lord Gordon was an enemy of ours," the good woman said when she had finished telling Enoch of that gentleman's kindness. "He has acted the part of a true friend, and although he refuses to admit that he had any share in

Seth's escape, I am positive you and Jacob could not have succeeded but for him."

"He's a gentleman all the way through, that's what he is!" Enoch replied emphatically, "and I only wish we might have a chance to pay him for what he has done."

It was not safe to prolong the interview lest some of Mrs. Graydon's boarders should see the visitor and suspect he had just come from Valley Forge, therefore the boy left the house immediately his budget of news had been unfolded.

During the week which followed this visit Enoch worked industriously and conscientiously, spending his entire time on the streets, but without learning anything of importance.

Just before daybreak each morning he went to the market-place, where he was certain of meeting Greene, but not once had he anything to communicate.

"It seems as if I was wasting my time here," he said despondently on the morning of the eighth day when he and the spy were sheltered alike from the rain that was falling steadily and the observation of the enemy's patrols, through having sought shelter in a shed near the market-place. "I walk around all the time; but hear nothing except what it is possible the peace commissioners may accomplish when they arrive."

"It isn't to be expected you can bring in valuable news when everything is as quiet as appears now."

"Yet I might be of service in the army."

"No more than you are here. Except for the fact that they are drilled each day, Seth and Jacob are as idle as you."

"Has Jacob enlisted?"

"Yes; he could not hold out longer against his father's commands. Old Chris was ashamed because his son did not appear eager to enter the army, and declared that the boy should not leave the encampment, save as a soldier. Jacob tried twice to run away, but was stopped by the guard, and when the last failure was reported to the old baker he declared the boy must earn his livelihood in some way, so set him to work in the bakery. That was not at all to Master Ludwick's liking, and twenty-four hours later he was in the same company with Seth. I now make it a point never to visit camp without reporting to them as to your safety."

"Of course they know I am doing nothing."

"They know, as do all your friends and acquaintances, that you are here in a post of danger, on the alert for whatever may chance to occur."

"But there doesn't seem to be a likelihood anything of importance will happen. Since Sir Henry Clinton has taken Howe's place as commander of the army, it appears as if his plan was to remain idle, contenting himself with depriving us of our capital."

"His inaction is but the lull before the storm. General Washington feels so positive some decided movement is planned for the near future that all the troops at Valley Forge are ready to act at a mo-

ment's notice, and it is from you and I, as well as other friends of the cause here, that he expects to receive information which will enable him to checkmate the enemy. Don't grow despondent because you accomplish nothing great at once; but remember that the longer matters thus remain apparently stationary the nearer we are to a crisis."

This conversation served to cheer Enoch wonderfully, and as the days went by his mother was more reconciled to the part he was playing, although she reminded him daily of the promise to give up his task as a spy at the first good opportunity.

On the fourth of June, the king's birthday, Enoch saw the peace commissioners enter the city, received with courtesy by Sir Henry Clinton and his army, but neither the boy nor any true-minded American believed they would accomplish anything after General Washington had pronounced so decidedly against treating with the king on other terms than that of independence for the colonies.

So far as Enoch could learn, the commissioners did nothing save allow themselves to be entertained by the officers and Tory families. Congress refused to receive them until after the "hostile fleets and armies had been withdrawn, or the independence of the United States acknowledged," and, so far as advancing the king's cause was concerned, they might as well have remained at home.

Another week passed in what to Enoch seemed like idleness, and then Green electrified him by announcing:

"Within a few days we shall see stirring times, and you will have no further cause to complain that you are doing nothing."

"What have you heard?"

"Nothing; but I have noticed that preparations are being quietly made for a general move——"

"I can't see that there has been any change."

"Nothing to particularly attract attention, I'll admit; yet it is a fact that the troops are nearly ready to evacuate the city, or make a forced march to Valley Forge for the purpose of attacking our camp."

"Is it possible General Clinton would do that?"

"It is possible, but not probable. My idea is that the Britishers will leave this city bag and baggage before we're many days older."

"I don't understand why they should."

"It is feared by the enemy that General Washington may strike a blow at New York, and Clinton's troops are needed there to prevent a possible disaster. Then again they are accomplishing nothing here, and the British government don't relish the idea of paying twelve or fifteen thousand men for holding a town which is of no real benefit, save as a loafing-place for the officers."

"If they evacuate this city will they be allowed to go away without being molested?"

"I think we can trust General Washington to take care of them, and when you see the redcoats start you can be mighty certain a battle ain't far off."

"And I won't be in it!" Enoch exclaimed mourn-

fully. "Seth and Jacob will play the part of soldiers, while I hang around here as if I was afraid."

"I promise faithfully that you shall be in the thick of any scrimmage that comes, so don't let such thoughts worry you. Have patience a few days longer, and keep your eyes open wider than usual."

"Is there anything in particular to be done?"

"Loiter around the City Tavern as much as possible. The officers may give their friends an idea of what is going to happen, and you stand a good chance of overhearing the gossip. The lightest hint now from a prominent Tory will have a big meaning."

From this moment it appeared to Enoch as if he could perceive a change of demeanor in those whom he met. The British officers no longer sauntered to and fro as if time hung heavily on their hands, but went from point to point rapidly, much as though they had business which would permit of no delay.

The Tories, who during the winter had assumed a lordly bearing, now looked anxious, and well they might, for their lot would not be an enviable one when the Continental army stood in the place of the redcoats, and those who had been oppressed because of loyalty to the cause would be in a position to demand reprisals.

It seemed to the boy as if nearly all whom he saw were aware of the impending change, and he

went about his business of listening with more confidence than ever before.

On the night after his last conversation with Greene he saw an unusually large throng in front of the City Tavern, and, as a matter of course, pretended to be on the point of entering the building in order that he might mingle with the bystanders.

Ordinarily he would have moved slowly onward to prevent any one from suspecting he really wished to listen, but on this night, excited beyond the bounds of prudence, he deliberately halted in front of a group composed of two officers, a citizen, and a Quaker who had the appearance of having just come from the country.

"The fact is known to but few, and we depend upon our friends in whom we have confided to keep it a secret," one of the officers was saying as Enoch approached.

"There is little doubt but that thy plans are known to the rebel Washington, for his men are ready to execute a quick movement," the Quaker replied. "It is to be regretted that any of the citizens were trusted with thy secret, for all are not loyal to the king."

"Very true, friend Williams; there are more of King George's enemies in Philadelphia to-day than there were two weeks ago. The belief that his majesty's troops are about to leave has made those who had a leaning toward the rebels brave, and they now hope to find favor in the eyes of the new rulers of the city."

"Has the day been fixed upon?" the man in citizen's garb asked, and Enoch pressed yet nearer to hear the reply.

So eager was the boy to learn this most important bit of information that he gave no heed to the fact he was pressing against the Quaker more rudely than would have been proper even if they had been crowded for space, and before the officer could speak Enoch was seized suddenly by the ear.

Looking up quickly and in alarm, he saw that his captor was the Quaker, and now for the first time realized that the man's face was one he had seen before, although where he could not remember.

"Thou art an eavesdropper, lad, and one who makes it his calling, if I do not mistake," the Quaker said sternly. "What business hast thou here?"

"I was going into the tavern, sir," Enoch replied, his cheeks crimsoning with shame, and then he tried to wrench himself free regardless of the pain, for he recognized in his captor that Quaker at whose house General Lafayette had established his headquarters on Barren Hill.

"Thou wast not thinking of going into the tavern—at least, not until thou hadst learned the purport of our conversation. Have I not seen thee before?"

"I have always lived in this city, and it may have been that you and I have passed each other on the street," Enoch replied, with much stammering and show of confusion.

"I have seen thee elsewhere, lad. Unless I much mistake thou wast one who brought to the rebel Lafayette, when he was in my house, word that General Howe had started in pursuit of him."

"What is that?" one of the officers asked quickly, stepping in front of Enoch to peer into his face. "Are you certain this boy carried that information, Friend Williams?"

"It may be I am mistaken; but it does not seem possible. The lad much resembled this one; I saw him only for a moment, yet then I had a full view of his face."

By this time several of the gentlemen nearest had gathered around to learn the cause of the disturbance, for all, even including the Quaker, were displaying considerable excitement, and Enoch was so hemmed in that escape seemed impossible.

"It should be a simple matter to ascertain if he is in the rebel service," the second officer suggested. "A squad of our men chased two boys on that night, and, so it was reported, wounded or killed one of them. We will send this fellow to the guard-house until he has been seen by all. I would like to get hold of a few spies before we leave the city."

Enoch knew that even if those who had chased Jacob and himself failed to identify him, there were very many British soldiers, as well as officers, who knew him as one suspected of aiding Seth to escape, and that his doom was sealed once he was in custody.

It was absolutely necessary, if he would save his life, to make a supreme effort to get free before a squad of soldiers could be summoned, and even though he should fail, his position would be no more desperate than it already was.

The Quaker still retained his hold of the boy's ear, and one of the officers was grasping him by the collar, while on every side the throng was so dense that there appeared little hope he could force his way through, even though no one tried to detain him.

It was, perhaps, because of this fact that the officer's hold was by no means firm; but the Quaker was clutching his ear as if anticipating an attempt at escape.

The gentleman in the broad-brimmed hat was, therefore, the greatest obstacle in Enoch's road to freedom, and he it was who must be vanquished before further move could be made.

One of the officers had gone in search of the guard, and Enoch resolved on making a desperate effort.

Hanging back as far as possible in order to give greater effect to the blow, he suddenly lowered his head and darted forward at full speed.

The Quaker was taken by surprise, and could make no effort to protect himself. Enoch launched against him with all his strength, bringing forth a shrill cry of pain as the man of peace was doubled up like a pocket-knife, giving the boy an opportunity to leap directly over him.

Two other men were thrown down, and those who had been on the outskirts of the throng rushed quickly toward the immediate scene of action, thereby preventing the officer and his companion from giving chase.

Enoch ran as he had never run before, knowing full well that his life depended upon fleetness of foot, and before the excited men were fully aware of what had happened he was out of sight around the corner.

A pile of logs an hundred yards distant seemed to offer a temporary hiding-place, the whole being stacked up so loosely that he could readily make his way among them, and here he crouched, understanding that if he threw the pursuers off the scent now there was a fair possibility of escaping.

Nothing could have been done better on Enoch's part.

Such of the throng as were first around the corner shouted that the boy had taken refuge in the rear of the house, as seemed to be the case since he was no longer in sight, and the building was instantly invaded by a mob eager to hunt down a spy.

The shadows of evening were gathering, and Enoch knew if he could remain hidden half an hour longer his chances of escape would be good; but yet it was not safe to stay amid the logs.

As soon as it was learned that he had not taken refuge in the tavern, it would be suspected that he must have hidden in the immediate vicinity, and every nook and corner would be searched.

He began to have some idea of how a fox must feel when the dogs are on his scent, and the knowledge that he was battling for life removed, for the time being, all sensation of fear.

Creeping out to the very end of the logs he looked ahead.

In that direction was no place where he could be hidden.

In the rear two or three men at the corner of the building stood as if expecting he would appear at one of the windows.

"My only show is at the river," he said to himself. "If there's a boat afloat I may get away, and must take the chances."

Waiting only long enough to make certain no one was looking toward the log-pile, he darted out, stooping low that he might be the less likely to attract attention, and bending all his energies toward maintaining a swift pace.

Once he heard a loud shout, and he leaped forward yet more quickly, believing the pursuers were on his trail; but as he ran the noise died away in the distance, and he understood that he was safe for the moment.

There was no question in his mind but that every effort would be made to capture him.

He was suspected of aiding in Seth's escape; the Quaker declared he had brought to General Lafayette the first news of General Howe's advance, and he had been caught while trying to overhear a conversation which was intended to be private.

ARRIVING AT THE WATER'S EDGE, ENOCH'S COURAGE FAILED HIM, AND HE LOOKED WILDLY AROUND, SEEING NO HOPE.

Washington at Monmouth, p. 173.

"They've got proof enough that I'm a spy," he said to himself as he ran, "and the hanging would come mighty quick after I was caught. I shall be in a bad fix if I don't find a boat."

On arriving at the water's edge his courage failed him, and he looked wildly around, seeing no hope.

The only boat in either direction was hauled high up on the shore, and was so large that the united strength of two men would be no more than sufficient to move her. A short distance away, to the right, was a small sloop heeled over on the sand as she had been left by the workmen engaged in caulking her bottom.

Unless he made the desperate and dangerous attempt to swim across the river, this sloop was the only available hiding-place, and he was so nearly out of breath that it was absolutely necessary he should halt a few moments before continuing the flight, if indeed that would be safe now so many were undoubtedly searching for him.

There was no one to be seen on the land, and the ships of war lying at anchor in the river were so far away that he knew those on board could not distinguish him in the gloom.

He clambered up the almost perpendicular deck of the sloop, and from thence through the open hatchway into the hold.

Now he could rest, but it must only be until night had fully come, and then the flight was to be continued, unless before that time the enemy had captured him.

Crouching in the darkness of the tiny hold, panting so loudly from his severe exertions that it seemed as if the pursuers must hear him, Enoch tried to decide what his next move should be; but without arriving at any satisfactory conclusion.

Unless some one came to the shore in a small boat, leaving the craft afloat, he could not escape to the Jersey side of the river, and even if he gained the opposite bank there was no guarantee of his safety.

He was not acquainted with any one there, and would be forced to take refuge in the woods.

It did not seem possible he could make his way to the house where Greene professed to be working, for every patrol and sentry would be on the alert to prevent his escape in that direction.

"I shall have to go down the river, and take the chances of hiding in the woods," he said to himself. "It's a mighty slim show, but is considerably ahead of a Britisher's prison. I'll start in ten minutes, for by that time the night will have fully shut down, and trust to the chance of making my way along the shore."

He had hardly thus decided upon his course of action when the sound of footsteps on the sand caused his heart to beat yet more furiously, and it surely seemed as if fate was against him when he heard voices near at hand, as if the speakers had halted close beside the sloop.

While one might have counted twenty Enoch was in such a tremor of fear as not to understand what

was being said, and then he was aroused to a sense of duty by hearing the words:

"I have a copy of the order which will be issued on the sixteenth, and until then it must remain a profound secret, for Sir Henry is determined the rebels shall have no information of this move."

"Already it is common talk that we are to evacuate the town, and the boy who was detected listening in front of the tavern had probably been sent to learn the date of the movement."

"Did they capture him?"

"No; but it is only a question of time, for men are out in every direction, and it's certain he can't make his way toward the American lines unless all our patrols are asleep."

CHAPTER XII.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION.

The suggestion of the unknown speaker that it would be impossible for him to make his way toward the American lines without detection was by no means comforting to Enoch.

It was a situation, however, which he had anticipated, for he understood that the English would make every exertion to capture the messenger who had carried information to General Lafayette, and thereby, perhaps, saved him from capture.

In addition Enoch knew that the Tories would be most eager in their present mood to make him prisoner, for now that it seemed certain the city was to be evacuated, those who had been living a life of ease and comparative plenty because of their loyalty to the king felt particularly irritated against the Americans, who it was believed would so soon change very decidedly this satisfactory condition of affairs.

Enoch wondered not a little who the speakers were, and why they had chanced to halt directly outside his hiding-place.

From what he had heard he believed they were

members of the army, and it seemed strange they should have strayed down to the river bank, until the apparent mystery was solved when one of them said impatiently:

"At what hour did you understand that Lord Howe would send the boat for us?"

"Eight o'clock."

"And this was the landing-place he appointed, was it not?"

"The messenger said the boat would be put in near-by a sloop which was hauled up on the shore, and unless I am mistaken this is the only craft of the kind in the vicinity."

"I wish we might have been able to take to Lord Howe the information that the young rebel was apprehended, for I really believe he has not recovered from the chagrin of having ordered the frigate to be made ready with all dispatch to carry the Marquis de Lafayette a prisoner to England when he had captured him."

"He will have the pleasure of hearing such news before midnight, as to that there can be no doubt. You said you had a copy of the order which is to be issued on the sixteenth?"

"Yes, I saw the rough draft on Sir Henry's desk, and asked permission to make a copy for personal use. It may be the last order issued in the rebel capital, and I thought might at some time prove a curiosity."

"Can you give me the substance of it without violating any confidence?"

"I think so. I was only enjoined to keep it a profound secret from the civilians. It may be that it is yet sufficiently light for me to read it."

Then ensued a brief silence, during which Enoch's heart beat a triumphant tattoo, for he realized that now, when a moment previous it had seemed as if all his opportunities for gaining information were lost, he was about to learn that which General Washington was so eager to know.

The fugitive crouched yet nearer the deck-planking as Lord Howe's intended guest read slowly:

HEADQUARTERS, PHILADELPHIA, June 16, 1778.

"Lieutenant-General Knyphausen and Major-General Grant will cross the river to-morrow at four o'clock in the morning with the following regiments: Yagers, mounted and dismounted, Queen's Rangers, Hessian Grenadiers, Second Battalion New Jersey Volunteers,* Maryland Loyalists, Volunteers of Ireland, and the Caledonian Volunteers. All wagons and carts, with the wagons and bathorses† belonging to the general and staff officers, are to be embarked this afternoon at half-past three, at the upper coal wharf, and to-morrow at six all the saddle horses belonging to the general and staff officers are to be embarked at the same place, except two for the commander-in-chief, and one for each of the general officers. All the sick that are absolutely unable to march are to be at Primrose's Wharf to-morrow morning at five o'clock, where they will be received on board the Active."

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*This was a portion of the Tory force which had been recruited in New Jersey.

† A horse used for carrying the cooking utensils and similar camp equipage.

"I fancied we would go around by water," Enoch heard one of the men say after the order had been read; "but according to that it is evident we shall march across New Jersey."

"I believe that was Sir Henry's first intention; but fearing head winds might lengthen the passage, and that the rebel Washington would have an opportunity to capture New York, he has decided no such risks should be taken. For my part I am not unwilling to exchange this life of idleness for one of action, and hope we may see plenty of it."

"It appears quite evident your wish will be granted, for it is reported the rebels are in good condition for the summer campaign, and from the fact that they have so insolently rejected his majesty's proffers of peace I argue they are much stronger in numbers than ever before."

"However that may be, I care not; we shall soon whip out the overweening confidence in their own abilities, and before this campaign is ended I predict Congress will be suing for that which it has so promptly refused. Here comes a boat, and, if I mistake not, we shall learn considerably more of Sir Henry's intentions this evening than we already know."

The sound of footsteps on the sand told that the officers were moving toward the water's edge, and, shortly after, Enoch could distinguish the click of oars in the rowlocks.

Then came the short, quick orders of the cox-

swain in charge of the craft, and five minutes later a profound silence reigned.

The one thought now in Enoch's mind was, that he had learned that which it was of the utmost importance General Washington should know.

For the moment he forgot that armed men were searching for him in every direction, and that his capture was almost certain to be followed immediately by an ignominious death.

He had accomplished the mission with which he and Greene were intrusted, and it only remained to carry the information to headquarters.

With this thought came once more the realization of his utter helplessness and desperate situation.

It was possible he might remain undiscovered in his hiding-place until sunrise; but no longer, for then the laborers would resume work upon the sloop, and must unquestionably soon discover there was more in the hold than they had left there the night previous.

"It is more than my own life now that I am working for," the boy said to himself. "By repeating what I have heard General Washington will have a chance to strike a blow at the Britishers, and I shall indeed have been of service to the cause. That order is to be issued on the sixteenth, and the enemy will begin to leave on the seventeenth. There is plenty of time in which to carry the news, if I can succeed in finding Greene."

Fully alive to the importance of what he had learned, Enoch was now prepared to take greater

risks than when it was only a question of saving his own life.

The personal danger appeared to have been lessened, and the one idea in his mind was to make known without unnecessary delay that which he had learned.

No sound broke the stillness of the night as the boy clambered up from his damp hiding-place until he could peer out through the hatchway.

The darkness shrouded everything, and as if the elements were in sympathy with his purpose, heavy clouds obscured even the light of the stars.

"I couldn't have a better chance, and if I don't get past the guards which have been set it will be because I am stupid," Enoch thought as he drew himself up to the combing of the hatchway and dropped noiselessly down on the sand beneath.

Here he stood motionless an instant to listen.

In the distance could be heard the noises of the city, but close at hand appeared to be no living thing save himself.

Following up the bank of the river to the creek, and then into Third Street, he went cautiously, ready at any moment to break into a run, or retreat as should be necessary.

To venture upon the street did not seem prudent, therefore he swam the upper end of the creek, and made his way by a zigzag course, avoiding the thoroughfares to traverse gardens and lawns, but all the while continuing on in as nearly a direct course

as was consistent with safety toward the farmhouse where he believed Greene would be found.

More than once he heard the tramp of the patrol, and at such times he doubled here and there, moving cautiously as an Indian, and on the alert for the first sounds which should proclaim he was discovered.

An hour previous it had seemed impossible to him he could escape even the ordinary number of guards; but now when he knew they had been doubled, perhaps trebled, he instinctively—almost as if by chance—avoided them, until he was beyond the city and on the road over which Greene traveled when he brought his produce into the market.

Even now he knew he was far from safe, for squads of soldiers often patroled the country roads at a distance of four or five miles from the town at a late hour in the night, and he fully believed that on this occasion scouting parties would be sent in every direction.

Had he heard the orders given, however, he would have known that the only precaution taken to prevent his escape was to double the number of guards around the town, and that those who were searching for him believed he was yet hidden in some building near the City Tavern. Consequently a rigorous search was being instituted in that quarter, while he was lessening each moment the distance between himself and the American camp.

Even when he was so far out in the country that the lights of the city could no longer be seen, he

was afraid to travel at his utmost speed lest he should inadvertently come upon the patrol; but stopped at short intervals to listen.

Two hours passed, and during all this time he had continued steadily onward, without having heard anything to arouse his fears.

"Who would have believed I could have given them the slip so readily," he said to himself. "I thought when I jumped on board the sloop that I should only leave there as a prisoner, and perhaps if that order hadn't been read where I could hear it, I'd still be crouching in the hold waiting for the redcoats to pounce upon me. What a fool I was to so far forget myself as to brush up against that Quaker! Even if they hadn't suspected me of being a spy, I stood a chance of getting a flogging for my impudence. Yet suppose I hadn't been discovered? Then I shouldn't know the exact date set down for the evacuation of the city. Everything has happened in my favor, and——"

He ceased speaking very suddenly, for in the distance he could hear the sound of footsteps, and waiting only long enough to assure himself there had been no mistake, Enoch darted into the bushes that lined the road on either side at this point.

Then came the thought that it was nearly time for Greene to go into town, and pressing as closely to the edge of the road as was possible without showing himself, the boy waited until the pedestrian should appear.

After a short time he saw a single figure ap-

proaching with a burden upon his back; but the night was so dark that Enoch was unable to determine whether this was the man whom he hoped to meet or some enemy.

He hesitated to make himself known until he realized that if the spy should pass him he might have difficulty in carrying his news to Valley Forge, and, regardless of possible danger, cried softly:

"Robert Greene!"

The figure halted, looked around for a moment, and then was apparently about to resume the journey when Enoch asked in a low tone:

"Is that you, Mr. Greene?"

"I know no one of that name, and if it was mine wouldn't be willing to own it to one who is afraid to show himself."

Enoch recognized the voice, and springing forward with an exclamation of joy literally hugged the vegetable-laden spy.

"Is it you, Enoch?" Greene asked in surprise. "What has happened? Have you been in danger?"

"I was discovered by a Quaker at whose house General Lafayette lodged at Barren Hill, and seized by him and a British officer in front of the City Tavern."

"But how did you escape?"

"Come with me into the bushes, for I am afraid men will be sent out on this road, since you told the patrol I was in your employ."

When the two were screened from view of any who might chance to pass, Enoch told his story in

all its details, interrupted only by low chuckles of satisfaction now and then, and exclamations of pleasurable surprise when the more important portions of his adventures were related.

"You have done a good work this night, lad! A brave work, and your seeming misfortunes were the luckiest that ever befell man or boy. I was not mistaken in you, lad."

"But I haven't done anything, Mr. Greene. It was all an accident, and one that came very near costing my life."

"Never mind how it came about. The work has been done, and we can carry to Valley Forge such news as has long been waited for—news that will change the condition of affairs there very decidedly."

As he spoke Greene sprang to his feet, and seizing Enoch by the arm went hurriedly into the road.

"Are you going to leave your market-truck?" Enoch asked.

"I would willingly leave everything on Rogers' farm to the mercy of the Britishers after such word had been brought, my boy. Now step out at your liveliest pace until we can get the horses, and then it is a question of a quick ride to headquarters to announce the fact that our work has been finished in the completest manner."

"But isn't it dangerous to go ahead too boldly? There may be soldiers between here and the farm."

"I will answer for it there are none, lad, for

haven't I just traveled over this road? It is seldom they come out so far unless in goodly force."

"I thought perhaps scouts might be sent in every direction, for the two men whom I heard talking while I was in the sloop seemed very certain I'd be captured."

"They are most likely looking for you in the city yet, and a rare time they'll have of it. I would have been willing to give a good many shillings if I could have seen the old Quaker's face when you bowled him over. So he must have been the one who warned Howe of General Lafayette's advance? We'll settle matters with him after the evacuation, and there are one or two other Quakers who should be attended to, particularly he who would have made prisoners of Generals Reed and Cadwalader."

"I have never heard of him."

"Then I will tell you the story, and it isn't a bad one, seeing that it didn't turn out to our disadvantage. The two generals were reconnoitering the country, and stopped at the house of a Quaker with whom they were acquainted. I don't remember his name. After leaving him, and it may be certain he protested that he dearly loved the cause, it began to rain, and Cadwalader and Reed, fearing lest their blue cloaks should be injured by the water, turned them inside out. Now it so chanced that these same cloaks were lined with red, and as they returned past the house they had just visited, in the gloom of the evening it was not unnatural that they should have been mistaken for English officers.

That is exactly the mistake the Quaker made, and he rushed out quickly, shouting: 'Gentlemen, gentlemen, if you will only turn back, you will certainly catch General Reed and General Cadwalader, who have just gone down this road.' I'll lay guineas to pence that he could have bitten his tongue when the two officers made themselves known. And what a wigging they gave him! General Reed promised that when the proper time came he would square accounts with that man of peace, and I reckon he won't forget his word. Neither shall I neglect the Quaker you tumbled over in front of the City Tavern. That was a narrow escape for you, my boy."

"I don't care to try anything of the kind again," Enoch replied grimly.

"Not unless it could result as happily as this adventure has. You made a mistake in being too eager to overhear the conversation, and by that very mistake accomplished all we wanted to know."

Greene did not cease commenting upon the events of the evening and congratulating Enoch, until they had arrived at the farmhouse where he pretended to be employed.

There horses were procured with the least possible delay, and the two set out toward Valley Forge at full speed, Enoch's heart beating rapidly with joy and exultation, as he thought that at last he would have an opportunity of speaking with General Washington, and would be a welcome visitor.

Only at such times as it was absolutely necessary did the travelers slacken their pace, and the sun had not yet risen when they were halted by the pickets of the encampment.

Greene was provided with a password which would admit him without delay, whatever the parole or the countersign might be, and after a brief pause the two spies galloped at full speed up to the rude hut where General Washington had lived during the severe winter.

"Robert Greene to see the commander-in-chief on urgent business," was the reply to the challenge of the sentries who guarded the building, and so well was the spy's name known that no hesitation was made in awakening the general.

The two were ushered into the sleeping apartment, and there, as he lay in bed, his face lighted up in anticipation of welcome news, Enoch saw the commander whom he revered.

After Greene had hurriedly given the information they had brought, the boy was made more than happy when Washington took him by the hand and said:

"You are a brave lad, Enoch Ball. You have rendered good service, and I thank you."

To be thanked by General Washington was a greater reward, in Enoch's eyes, than a commission would have been in Jacob's, and he felt that whatever the future might have in store for him he had been fully repaid for everything by these three words from such a man.

"Will it be advisable, do you think, sir, for the boy to return to Philadelphia?" Greene asked.

"Not to the town itself, while the British are in possession; but he might remain at your rendezvous to act as messenger between there and the camp, although I question if you will have any further important information to bring us, unless it should chance that the order was not issued."

"It is my desire, sir, to enlist as a soldier," Enoch said timidly.

"It would seem as if you already were one, save for the ceremony of signing your name. Remain with Greene until some decided move is made, and then it shall be my care to see that your desire is granted. In the meantime you may consider yourself as attached to my staff in order that there shall be no question about rations. Mr. Greene, you will see that the boy messes with my aids while he is in camp."

Enoch was so overwhelmed by the honor thus conferred upon him as to be hardly aware of what he did during the next few moments.

When Greene touched him on the arm to signify that the interview was at an end and they should depart, he followed like one in a dream wherever the spy led him, until the latter said, laying his hand heavily upon the boy's shoulder:

"Haven't you a word of comment, lad, upon the honor you have received? Let me tell you there are few men in the Continental army who wouldn't be bristling with pride in your place."

"It doesn't seem possible! I cannot realize that the general really meant it! *I* mess with his aids!"

"But it is not only messing, lad; you are attached to his staff—perhaps not in a very important position; but when it is known that because of personal services you have rendered, the commander-in-chief allows you to consider yourself one of the 'members of his family,' as the staff is termed, you will be treated with greater respect than if Congress had given you a colonel's commission."

"I know the honor is great," Enoch said slowly; "but I am almost afraid——"

"Of what?"

"That in such a position I shall do something wrong—make a fool of myself, or so behave that the general will be sorry he praised me."

"Never you fear for that, lad. A boy who can have such fears won't go far astray. Attached to the staff of General Washington, the commander-in-chief of the Continental army! Well, if that isn't an honor for a boy hardly more than sixteen years old I don't know what is! And it all came through a Tory Quaker, and the bungling of a spy in his work! Talk about chance!"

"That's just it," Enoch added hurriedly. "It was all a chance, therefore I don't deserve it."

"But I allow you do, my boy, so we won't discuss the matter. We're heading straight now for my regiment, and I intend that your friends shall hear this wonderful piece of news, even if I am forced to awaken them for the purpose of telling it."

"Why not wait until daylight?"

"Because I particularly want to see the expression on Master Ludwick's face when he learns that you have earned more than a commission."

"I am afraid Jacob will feel sore."

"Afraid? I know he will, and that's why I propose telling the news at once."

"But he is a good friend, and was never as disagreeable as since the night we carried the news to General Lafayette. Then he allowed himself to believe we were to be made officers at once, and it was disappointment that prevented him from acting as he would have done the day before."

"He could never really have had the good of the cause at heart, otherwise his father's threats would not have been necessary in order to force him to enlist. However, I will take your word for it that he is a good comrade; but at the same time I am bound he and all the members of my regiment shall know what General Washington has said to you this evening."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE EVACUATION.

ENOCH finally succeeded in persuading Greene that it was not necessary to arouse all the New Jersey militia in order to inform them of what had occurred, since in two hours the encampment would be astir, and then the news could be told with less inconvenience to those who might desire a full night's sleep.

"I hate to wait even five minutes, Enoch; but reckon I am bound to, if you say the word. We'll tumble into the first vacant place we find, and get a nap 'twixt now and sunrise."

This was a proposition which pleased Enoch. The journey from Philadelphia, hurried as it was, had fatigued him greatly, and he felt decidedly in need of rest.

He had hardly stretched himself out on the bed just vacated by one of the men whose turn it was to do guard duty when his eyes were closed in slumber, and it seemed to him that hardly more than a dozen minutes had elapsed before he was awakened by the hum of conversation and the trampling of many feet.

It could readily be understood that he must have

been asleep several hours, and it was evident Greene had taken advantage of the opportunity to relate at least a portion of the previous night's incidents, for Enoch heard a man standing near by say in a tone of envy:

"When a boy like him is thanked by General Washington and allowed to consider himself a member of the staff, so to speak, it seems as if he shouldn't want much of anything more in this world. I have faced death many a time, and never received so much as a look."

"And so have thousands of others," Greene said sharply. "You, a man, have simply done a soldier's duty; the boy, not even a member of the army, has taken his life in his hands since he left this camp, with the chance of a felon's doom if he was captured, and I tell you what it is, Jim Downing, you never stood any nearer death on the field of battle than that lad did last night when he was recognized by the Quaker. If I had known of it at the time I wouldn't have given sixpence for his show."

"I ain't whinin', Boh Greene, 'cause of lack of luck. I'm willin' to admit that the boy has done great service, and hasn't been rewarded any too richly. I was just considerin' what I'd be glad to go through an' to suffer for the sake of what he's received."

"You're getting your reward, as a good many of us are, in the knowledge that you're doing all you can for the cause, and that ought to be enough, Jim."

"I allow there's some satisfaction in it; but it seems hard at times that a man has got only one life to give for such as we're fightin' to gain. If he had a dozen, an' laid 'em all down, it wouldn't be too big a price to pay for the independence of these 'ere colonies."

"Right you are, Downing, right you are! The pity is that more are not in the same way of thinking. Hello, Enoch! This chatter kind of disturbed you, I reckon."

"I have slept as long as was necessary," the boy said as he rose to his feet, looking almost ashamed because of the praise he had heard. "Where are Seth and Jacob?"

"Out on duty. If you stay where you are ten minutes more they'll be here, and in the meantime it mightn't be a bad idea for you to mosey over to headquarters for breakfast."

"I had rather not go," and now Enoch looked really disturbed. "Can't I get some rations here?"

"Of course you can, lad," Jim Downing said quickly as he laid his hand on Enoch's shoulder. "There won't be any trouble about that, and even if there was I'd gladly share mine with you. But why don't you want to go over to headquarters?"

"It would look as if I was trying to force my way in where I didn't belong."

"Not a bit of it. According to what Greene says you've not only got the right to go there, but it's the proper place."

"I can get along without any breakfast as well as not," Enoch said carelessly, as if to dismiss the subject; but Mr. Downing was not of the same mind.

"It does me good to see a modest youngster once in awhile, we have so few of 'em 'round about. I am told Jacob Ludwick was one of your cronies. Now I can't understand how you two boys hitched up together. He never will be hanged for modesty."

"But he is brave."

"And he means everybody shall know it. Why, since he come into this 'ere company he hasn't done much of anything he wasn't obliged to except tell about the ride you and he had from town up to Barren Hill. I don't throw any discredit on what you two did that night; but at the same time I ain't willin' to allow it was such a terrible bold thing. Bob Greene tells me you knocked down Williams, the Tory Quaker?"

"He tipped over when I ran against him, that was all."

"And I hope he struck the sidewalk hard enough to shake some little sense into his thick head. I always misdoubted that precious Quaker, though I can't say that he professed to think very highly of the cause. Leastways he didn't give out as doing so; but yet allowed us to believe he was on our side, and so had a chance to do a good bit of mischief. Now I'll look after your breakfast, and you shall have the best the camp affords."

"Can't I go with you? There is no reason why you should bring the food to me."

"It'll be just about as easy, and you may as well stay here so as to be on hand when your friends come."

"Jim" Downing was not the only man in the encampment who appeared eager to show some special attention to the boy whom General Washington had honored.

Every soldier Enoch met displayed particular regard for him, and but for Master Ball's innate modesty he might have been decidedly distorted by pride during this day at Valley Forge.

Seth and Jacob were not relieved from duty as soon as Greene had anticipated. Enoch's breakfast had been brought and disposed of before they entered the hut, and the warmth of their greetings told of the pleasure they felt in seeing him.

"If it hadn't been for father's keeping me here I'd have got just as fat a berth as has come to you, because we should have been together," Jacob said enviously. "It always seems to be my luck to have something like that happen while anything big is going on. When we drew lots it was Seth who won the chance to carry information to the Continentals——"

"That didn't seem like such very good luck when poor Seth was in prison as a spy, and with a chance of being hanged."

"It didn't just at that time, for a fact; but we got him out of the scrape easy enough."

"Easier, perhaps, than I should have been able to do if you had been in my place," Seth replied heartily, and it could readily be seen that this praise was gratifying to Master Ludwick.

"But luck wasn't against you when you planned and carried out so successfully the seizing of Mr. Wharton's horses," Enoch added. "All the credit of that piece of work is certainly due to you."

"Yes, and see what I got out of it! General Lafayette was much obliged, and that's all. I wasn't even allowed to do as I wanted to, but had to enlist when I could have gone with you and earned for myself a share in the commission you are likely to receive."

"But he ain't likely to receive a commission," Greene interrupted. "Nor he wouldn't take one if the commander-in-chief should be so foolish as to offer it. Enoch is a boy that has a pretty good idea of what he can do, and you'll never find him trying to get above himself."

"Meaning to say I do, eh?"

"I was only speaking for Enoch. Hark you, Jacob, you have enough of what you call 'luck,' only you don't appreciate it. What has come to Seth more than you have got? Nothing. What has come to Enoch? The honor of being fed in the commander-in-chief's mess; but when things are straightened out you'll find him drop into place as a private, with never a bit of grumbling because he ain't given a chance to take command of the army. This business of luck isn't much more nor less than

the way you look at a thing. Try your best to do whatever comes to hand, and you'll find that the average share of luck will follow."

After the first surprise was over Jacob behaved in a more manly fashion than Greene had anticipated, and nothing occurred to mar the pleasure of one of the most satisfactory days Enoch had ever spent.

He was forced many times to repeat the story of his adventure in the city, after having been recognized by the Quaker, for officers as well as men were eager to learn the details, and even this was not displeasing to Master Ludwick, since it naturally led up to the recounting of the previous events in which all three of the boys, in turn, played a prominent part.

Then came the hour for departure.

Greene, who was closeted for some time with General Dickinson, had received orders for certain work to be done prior to the day set for the evacuation, and this required that Enoch should continue his duties as a spy.

Shortly after nightfall the two set out, accompanied as far as the outposts by Seth and Jacob, and when they were finally free from the camp, riding at a leisurely pace, Enoch asked:

"What am I to do now, Mr. Greene?"

"Hang around the farm, ready to bring any news which I may gather. From now out the command is that I spend a good portion of my time in town, for you see, lad, it isn't certain but that

the order you heard read may be changed, and the evacuation will take place earlier or later. But seein's how we've had information ahead of even Clinton's own officers, we're bound to hold the advantage by making certain we keep posted in all that's being done."

"Am I to go to the city?"

"Not before the morning of the seventeenth, if it so be Clinton sticks to the plan according to the programme you heard. Then you shall have a chance to see the Britishers march out, for once they begin to move our work will be done in this section of the country."

When the two arrived at the farmhouse Enoch was given a bed in the attic, with orders to remain closely under cover during the daytime, and to be ready for a trip to Valley Forge at a moment's notice.

Then the spy left him, and although he watched hourly for Greene's return, anticipating with no slight degree of pleasure a visit to Valley Forge, he was disappointed.

The days passed slowly, and as each went by Enoch grew more and more distressed in mind, for it seemed certain Greene must have been captured, otherwise he would have returned even though he he had learned nothing new.

Shortly before midnight of the sixteenth the spy made his appearance once more, and looking none the worse for his long absence.

"No, I wasn't caught, nor in any danger what-

ever," he said in reply to Enoch's eager questions. "As a matter of fact I have been living in clover since I saw you last, for I took up my quarters in your mother's house, and she feasted me on the fat of the land. Your mother is a great cook, Enoch!"

"But what made you stay away so long? I thought I was to carry to Valley Forge what you learned?"

"And so you would if I had learned anything, lad. But bless you, there's nothing new going on."

"What? Have the Britishers given up the idea of evacuating the city?"

"No, indeed. I meant there was nothing more happening in town than we knew when last at Valley Forge. All I could gather was to the same effect as that which you discovered so oddly, and there surely was no necessity of repeating that to General Washington, therefore I remained quiet, as safe in the city as if I had been a Tory of the rankest kind. The order you heard read was issued this morning, and, as nearly as I could learn, not changed in any respect. It is evident Clinton anticipates some trouble from camp followers, seeing so many of his men have taken wives since they came to Philadelphia, and there's a host of women in that town to-night ready to scratch out the Britisher's eyes, for he has issued orders regarding them which are not at all pleasing. The first appeared this morning, and I reckon wasn't intended for the public; it read something like this: 'If any regiment has more women than is allowed, the commanding officer is

desired to send them down to the ships, if he can possibly get an opportunity; if not, they are to march with the army, and, by way of punishment, will be allowed no provisions.' Trust to a woman for finding out what it ain't intended she should know! Some of these Tory girls, thinking they had a rich prize when they married redcoats, heard of it, and in certain quarters of the city there was a deal of harsh language. Then came the second order, which was posted in the barracks where every one could see it: 'All women of each regiment will march at the head of it under an escort of the non-commissioned officers and six men, who will take care they do not go out of the road on any account, and the provost marshal has received positive orders to drum out any woman who shall disobey this order.'"

"Then the city is to be really evacuated?"

"Yes, lad; the word is for the last of the Britishers to cross the river at Gloucester Point at daylight on the morning of the seventeenth. I allow it's time for you to come into town, if you want to see what's going on, for they will pay no attention to you from this out. Your mother is expecting us there 'twixt now and sunrise."

"Did you tell her what General Washington said to me?"

"I did, lad, and if there's a prouder woman in Pennsylvania than she I don't know where to find her. Unless you've got some reason for not going at once we'll leave now, because I'm not counting

on missing any part of the show, and allow you're quite as eager to see it as I am."

Enoch would have been pleased to leave the farm-house even though he had had no anticipation of such a spectacle as must of necessity be presented when the English troops filed out of the city they had so long occupied, and no delay was made by Greene in retracing his steps.

Although it was not expected the enemy would take any very great precautions to prevent undesirable visitors on this the eve of the evacuation, Greene did not think it quite prudent to attempt to ride into town, therefore set out on foot.

"It will be the last time we shall have to sneak into Philadelphia, lad," the spy said exultantly when they were on the road. "I don't allow that from this out the enemy will ever again have possession of the town, for what we've got now we'll hold."

Enoch was too greatly excited to carry on any conversation just at this moment.

It seemed to him as if he had been absent from home an exceedingly long time, and he was not only eager to see his mother, but to tell her of the praise he had won from the "only man in all the country" to him.

Greene, however, was inclined to be garrulous. He told stories of his army life; related incidents regarding this officer or that, and, finding he was not attracting his companion's attention, changed the subject abruptly by saying:

"And now, lad, it can't be many days before

we'll have a pitched battle, and I hope to see you in it on General Washington's staff, rather than as a private."

"But that would be ridiculous, Mr. Greene. What could I do in such a position?"

"Very little, lad, I'll admit; but still I'm hoping to see you there for the honor of it, and I shall be claiming my share since you are my subordinate."

Although Enoch did not believe such an event probable, he could not prevent himself from speculating upon the possibility, and very pleasant to him were these speculations.

The journey from the farmhouse to the city was not accomplished in as short a time as usual; perhaps because Greene was weary with much walking, and not until nearly an hour after sunrise did they arrive within sight of Philadelphia.

Then Greene threw his hat high in the air, dancing and capering like a crazy man, for, dotting the surface of the Delaware thickly, could be seen boats carrying the troops named in the first general order, and the evacuation had begun.

"I want to do my crowing now," the spy said in explanation of his conduct, "for we shall be forced to wear long faces when we come into town. There are Britishers enough left behind to put us in the pillory and seam our backs with their whips of wire as a pleasant diversion in case we make ourselves too conspicuous. I don't allow there's any danger of being overhauled by the patrol if we exercise ordinary caution, and I surely shan't take any risks.

We'll skirt around to the right, and slip in to Letitia Street as quietly and modestly as the Tories will behave from this time out."

"Wait a few moments. Let us enjoy this sight while we can, Mr. Greene," and Enoch gazed intently at the retreating forces.

"To-morrow there will be a brave spectacle, lad, when the last boatload of redcoats has pushed off, and we can stand on the bank and cheer and hoot to our heart's content without fear of being clapped into a guardhouse. It's when every mother's son of 'em leaves Pennsylvania soil that the city will be a comfortable abiding place."

Enoch was not willing to forego the pleasure of seeing that which was already spread out before him, although there was promise of a much finer spectacle, and he remained silent and motionless ten minutes or more, until his companion said impatiently:

"I am sorry to interrupt you, lad, especially when you are looking on such a scene; but it must be done. We should not lose any more time."

"But surely you don't expect there will be work to do now the Britishers have really begun to go?"

"I don't expect it, lad; but yet at the same time something of importance might happen, and I must be where I can hear all the news."

Enoch could not well linger after this, and turning irresolutely, as if it cost him some effort to shut out such a view, he followed the spy.

By making a wide detour they entered the town

from the rear, and walked through the almost deserted streets without molestation.

Every person able to be abroad on that morning, whether patriot or Tory, was assembled on the river bank to witness the departure of the troops, and even General Washington himself might have walked through a goodly portion of the city at that time without attracting attention.

The meeting between Enoch and his mother was, as may be fancied, particularly affectionate, and while each was clasped in the other's embrace Greene left the house.

During an hour or more Enoch told in detail all his adventures, and then, when that subject was exhausted, began to wonder why Greene did not return.

Not until night had come did the spy enter the house, and then it was to greet his young comrade with a hearty hand-clasp, as he said:

"There will be no hitch in the programme, lad. At daybreak to-morrow the last redcoat will go. This evening such of the troops as remain were drawn up into line, and without warning marched down the river a mile or more, where they are bivouacked on the shore."

"Why was that done?" Enoch asked quickly.

"It is what we must thank Clinton for, and I allow it's the only thing we have to be grateful about, so far as he is concerned. The soldiers, knowing they were to leave in the morning, might, as has been done in other cases, run wild over the

city and do much damage. Anything of that kind has been prevented. Then again, the British commander isn't so certain he'll be followed by all his men, for it's said that desertions have been great since morning; but taking them unawares as he did, he has been able to partially check the defection."

"You haven't learned anything new?"

"No, lad, nothing of importance. When the last boatload has left the shore I shall make for Valley Forge at full speed, although there's little need of doing so, since General Washington understands that the order you heard read is being carried out, unless one of us should report to the contrary in the meanwhile. What do you say for a walk about town?"

"Is it safe?"

"Safe, lad? Why, there are no soldiers in the city, although a good many of the officers have not left their quarters yet, and I guarantee that the Tories will keep their heads under cover mighty snug from this out."

Enoch would have accepted the invitation but that he saw his mother was disturbed at the idea of his doing what seemed venturesome.

"I will wait until morning, Mr. Greene, and then we'll post ourselves somewhere near the Middle Ferry, where we shall see the ending of it all."

"Very well, lad, as you please. Perhaps it *is* foolish for you to venture too much, seeing that the Britishers have still got the upper hand of us here,

and might pay off an old score or two on your back. If I am not at the house sooner, I'll call before daylight, and then we'll enjoy ourselves as hasn't been possible since General Howe took pos session of this town."

CHAPTER XIV.

LORD GORDON.

This night in Philadelphia, when the British, after having long held possession of the city, had so far progressed in the evacuation that only the officers were yet in town, was both a happy and an anxious one to the inhabitants.

Those people who had remained true to the American cause rejoiced that their friends would soon be in possession of the chosen capital of the country, and were looking forward eagerly to the morrow when the Continental forces should enter to take possession of their own once more.

Hundreds of patriots confined in the prisons for no other crime than that of loyalty to their country were waiting eagerly for the morning when their cell-doors would be unlocked by friends, and they free at last to render aid to that cause so near their hearts.

In the homes of the Tories all wore an anxious look; they had spent a winter of gayety, while the representatives of the king held the city, and probably fancied the spirit of freedom would be so thoroughly crushed that Philadelphia would always be loyal to the English government.

Now they knew that everything was to be changed, and, as in many instances, having oppressed their neighbors who favored the struggle for independence, feared that reprisals would be demanded. Hundreds of Tories—delicately nurtured women, men accustomed to every luxury, and children whose every desire had been gratified—were about to follow the army on its march across New Jersey, or, as their means and the possibility would permit, intended to travel by various conveyance to New York.

These last were particularly sad because of the severing of all home ties for an indefinite period—perhaps forever—and to those who were anxious, as well as to those who were happy, slumber did not come on this night.

The happiness and the grief were too great to permit of the unconsciousness of sleep.

In Mrs. Ball's home, mother and son, reviewing again and again the events with which the boy had been intimately connected, put off the time for retiring yet a little longer at each stroke of the clock, until Enoch finally said:

"It's no use, mother, I can't go to bed. I shouldn't sleep if I tried, and on this night of all others it seems as if we might keep watch."

"For what purpose, my son?"

"I don't know. It appears to be a fact that the city will be entirely evacuated by the enemy in the morning, and yet I can't prevent fears that something may happen to change General Clinton's plans.

At all events, Greene will be here at least an hour before daylight, and it is now nearly midnight, therefore why should we make any attempt at sleeping?"

A knock at the door, loud, quick, and, if such could be, one might almost say joyous, and Enoch answered it without hesitation, for he fancied he knew who would demand admittance in such a fashion.

"Not in bed yet, good people?" and Greene seated himself near the window.

"Enoch was just saying he could not sleep, and proposed that we sit up until morning."

"I venture to say there will be no slumber in nineteen houses out of every twenty in the city this night, and yet we who love the cause should be able to sleep now, if ever."

"You do not appear to be doing much in that line," Enoch suggested with a smile.

"Well, no, I am feeling too good just now to want to surrender consciousness, even for the sake of a rest. Such an experience as this doesn't come more than once in a person's lifetime, and he shouldn't lose any of the pleasurable sensations. I'll join your vigil as if it was New Year's eve, and we'll watch the British out and the Americans in."

Until the time the spy had set to go to the river bank, the three talked of the disappointments in the past and the hopes for the future, and then Greene and Enoch left the house.

There were more signs of life on the street, even

at this early hour, than when they had entered the city the day previous.

The citizens who had been faithful to the cause during this long occupation by the enemy were now coming out in full force to witness his departure, and a happy, joyous throng it was.

"Will General Washington come to-day?" Enoch asked of his companion.

"No; General Arnold will take possession of the city with a small force. We shan't see the commander-in-chief in town until something decisive has been done, according to my way of thinking," answered Greene.

"How long are we to stay here?"

"I shall start for Valley Forge when the last boatload of soldiers puts out from the shore. You will stay until word comes from General Dickinson."

"Do you intend to walk to the farm?"

"No; I shall have no trouble in borrowing a horse now that our friends are not afraid of getting into trouble by doing such a service. Here is a good place for us to witness the scene, and on this rising ground the view cannot be shut off from us, however many may be around."

Greene had halted on the slight elevation of ground a short distance from the Middle Ferry, and already could be seen in the stream boatloads of soldiers putting out from the Philadelphia side of the river, while from each of the landing-places the refugees—men, women and children—were embark-

ing such portable effects as they would be permitted to carry on board the vessels lying at anchor.

The sun had not yet risen; but the adherents of King George were hastening to depart from the soil of Pennsylvania, greatly to the delight of those who had been so long oppressed.

Enoch had no desire to talk, and hardly heard what Greene said as he made several attempts to enter into conversation. The boy's eyes were fixed upon the panorama before him, and he thought of nothing save the fact that the city was being freed from the enemy.

Until half-past nine he remained thus absorbed in the view, and then a mighty shout went up from the assembled throng—a shout which was echoed and re-echoed from one end of the city to the other.

The last boatload, among which was General Knyphausen, had pushed off from the shore.

"It is done at last!" Enoch cried, seizing Greene by both hands.

"It is indeed, my boy, and we have been permitted to see it all! It is such a sight as we'll hope never will be repeated on the Delaware River. Now I must be off. You will either see me or receive some word within the next twenty-four hours. Be ready to leave home without delay when the summons comes, for I should be sadly disappointed if we had a brush with Clinton's men and you were not in it."

"So should I. Don't forget me when you are with the army."

"Never fear anything like that. It wouldn't be possible while I was where Seth and Jacob could see me. But come, I'm going very near Drinker's Alley. Walk so far with me; step in for a moment and see if Mrs. Graydon has any message to send her son, for you will meet him shortly, and then, after General Arnold and his men arrive, go home and wait for me or my message."

Enoch had not broken his fast, but was hardly aware that he needed food, so great was his joy.

He acted upon Greene's suggestion, and ten minutes later saw the spy ride out of the city at full speed, bound first for the farmhouse, where he would exchange his horse for a fresh one, and then to Valley Forge with the glad tidings.

On this occasion Enoch did not skulk around to the rear of the house when visiting Mrs. Graydon; but walked boldly to the front door, where he knocked with an air of one who is free to do as he chooses, startling Seth's mother not a little, when, his summons being answered by her servant, he rushed in upon her with the cry:

"The city is evacuated! The British are gone, and we shall never see them here again unless they come as prisoners!"

"Has the army left the city?" Mrs. Graydon asked as if in surprise.

"Why, yes; didn't you know they were going?"

"Certainly, I knew the evacuation was for to-day; but it can't be they have really gone?"

"Indeed they have! Greene and I watched the

last boatload put off from this side. There isn't a single redcoat in town, and before noon General Arnold will be here with a portion of the Continental army. Our own flag is floating over the city once more!"

Mrs. Graydon looked so thoroughly perplexed that just for a moment Enoch asked himself if it could be possible she was in sympathy with the enemy, and she, noting the look of perplexity on his face, said with a smile:

"You are wondering why I don't rejoice in the good news you have brought, Enoch; but the truth is that I fear there must be some mistake about it, for Lord Gordon hasn't yet come downstairs."

"Lord Gordon still here!" Enoch cried, now in turn becoming perplexed.

"Certainly. He very seldom rises early, and last night gave no orders to be called. I supposed that the army wouldn't go away before afternoon."

"But they have gone, and it isn't likely they are to remain at Gloucester Point any longer than is necessary. Why, Mrs. Graydon, if Lord Gordon is here an hour from now he will be made prisoner by our troops, and after all he has done for us that would seem like a terrible misfortune."

"Indeed it would, Enoch."

"I am going to waken him regardless of whether he left any orders or not; but what bothers me is, how we can get him over to the Jersey side, for the English took possession of all the boats on the river-

front, and I don't think there's a single craft to be found."

"Even though you waken him before our people come I fear for his safety, Enoch. The British have so oppressed those who were faithful to the cause that if it is known a member of their army is left behind something serious may be done."

"It is no use to stand here talking. He must get out of town, and that mighty quick! Where's his room?"

"The one directly over this."

Enoch did not hesitate; darting upstairs at full speed he burst into the chamber without ceremony, and Lord Cosmo Gordon, springing up in bed, his eyes heavy with slumber, demanded sharply:

"Who are you, sir? What do you want here?"

"I am only Enoch Ball, Lord Gordon. You remember me? You remember when Jacob Ludwick and I talked with you about Seth?"

"Oh, it is you, is it?" the officer said as he sank back upon the pillows. "You appear to be an energetic lad; but I can't say I have any great admiration for your manners."

"But, Lord Gordon, do you know that the Britishers have left the city, and that in a very short time our forces will be here?"

"The army gone?" and Lord Gordon sprang out of bed very suddenly. "Why, what time is it?"

"Past ten o'clock."

"And I have been allowed to sleep while my

command has gone over! This promises to be serious, my boy!"

"Serious, sir? I should say it was! After all that has happened I would rather a good bit of ill-fortune came to me than that you should be taken prisoner."

"I should die of mortification if it was known that I, a British officer, lay in bed while my troops marched out of town and left me to be captured. Lad, you believe I did you a service once?"

"Indeed you did, sir, and one I can never repay."

"You can repay it now, and with interest," Lord Gordon said as he began hurriedly to dress. "I must cross the river at once, and depend upon you to get me a boat."

"That is more easily said than done, sir. Your army has taken possession of every craft on this side; but I'll get one if I have to swim for it. What troubles me is that I may not succeed in time."

"The American forces are near the city?"

"Greene said General Arnold would arrive before noon."

"I'll go with you. We'll both search for a boat. Where is my servant?"

"I don't know, sir, unless he's with the army."

"That can't be, my boy. He wouldn't have left me, for— Oh, here you are, Richard," the officer added as a sleepy-looking man entered the chamber. "You neglected to awaken me, and I am in a most serious predicament."

"You gave no orders, my lord."

"You should have had wit enough to know that I intended to march with the army."

"But I have just wakened, my lord."

"And you don't have the appearance of one who has fully accomplished that yet. Get my things together as quickly as possible, and go down to the river. We shall start from the Middle Ferry."

"But, Lord Gordon, if you set out alone it must be from some place less public than that," Enoch said decidedly. "Remember that our people are freed from restraint now, and the temptation of having a British officer in their power might be so great that, if they didn't do real harm, they would at least prevent your leaving."

"You are right, my lad. I'll grant that you have a better head than I in this matter, and follow your directions."

"Then will you please stay here till I come back?"

"Yes, unless you are gone too long."

"But you must stay, no matter how long I am gone. I promise faithfully you shall be set across the river some time to-day, or night, if you will remain out of sight; but once you are seen I am afraid the work cannot be done."

"Do as you will, my lad. I agree to follow your instructions. If you succeed in your purpose you will repay me tenfold for the slight favor I did your friend."

"I only hope I shall come somewhere near squaring matters; but in one case a life was saved, and

in this it is only a question of your avoiding imprisonment."

"To be made a prisoner under these circumstances would be worse than death. Go, my lad, go quickly!"

Enoch ran downstairs, and stopped with his hand on the latch of the door to say to Mrs. Graydon:

"Won't you please keep the house locked, and make some excuse for not letting anybody in? The time has come when we can repay Lord Gordon for the assistance he rendered Seth, and you must do your share by keeping him out of sight."

"No person shall enter without first battering down the door," Mrs. Graydon replied with an air of determination, and Enoch darted out of the house, running up the alley at full speed.

Half an hour later he returned, breathless, but triumphant.

Lord Gordon, looking desperately anxious, met him at the door.

"I've got a skiff," he said as soon as it was possible for him to speak. "She's in the creek below Third Street. I can take you there without the chance of meeting many people; but we shall be obliged to walk fast, and you must pay no attention to whatever may be said."

"Don't fear I'll do anything to prevent the success of your efforts, my boy. My rejoining the army at the earliest possible moment is such a vital matter that nothing short of force would delay me."

The servant was summoned, and came down the

staircase as if still partially under the influence of sleep, laden with baggage.

"Look alive, man, can't you?" Enoch cried angrily as he took a portion of the burden from the fellow. "If nothing else will waken you, remember that your life is absolutely in danger from the time we leave this house until we are well out in the river."

These words had the desired effect, and the three, each carrying a portion of the luggage, left the house.

Enoch chose a most circuitous route, and although his lordship was jeered at many times during the short journey, nothing occurred to cause delay.

"She isn't a very fine craft," Enoch said when they reached the bank of the creek and he pulled out from the landing-stage a flat-bottomed boat; "but she'll take you over to the Jersey side, and I reckon that's all you want."

"Those who will show themselves to be such idiots as I have should be forced to swim for it," Lord Gordon said grimly, "and the situation now, compared with what it was half an hour ago, seems so bright that I wouldn't exchange your punt for one of the swiftest galleys of the fleet, except that I might arrive at the opposite shore more quickly."

There was only one pair of oars, and seating himself amidships, with Richard in the bow and Lord Gordon in the stern, Enoch plied these vigorously, as indeed was necessary in order to stem the flood-tide, which was now setting in strongly.

Nearly an hour was required in which to make the passage, and more than once did the officer insist he should be allowed to do a portion of the work; but Enoch would accept of no assistance.

"I should be only too glad to row you twenty miles, and all that distance against the tide, Lord Gordon, for then when I saw Seth I could say to him that we had been able to be of some service."

"You do not fully realize, my boy, how much assistance you have rendered me. I am under the deepest obligations, and that which I did in your service seems as nothing compared with this, for you have saved my honor. It is not my intention to offend you by offering payment; but I should be under yet greater obligations if you will allow me to give you some souvenir of this morning's work."

"You mean you want to make me a present?"

"Yes, Enoch, I want to leave with you something that you will remember me by—something which when you look at it you can say 'This was given me by a man to whom I rendered a greater service that if I had saved his life.'"

"I will take it, sir, and when I look at it will say to myself that it was given me by a gentleman who saved the life of my friend."

"Very neatly turned, my lad. You have a power of flattery which would win your way in a court."

"I wish I had the power that would win me my way in the Continental army."

"Are you intending to enlist?"

"Yes, sir. I do not want to say it boastingly;

but yet I am proud because the little which I did last week caused General Washington himself to thank me, and to say that I should attach myself to his staff until I was really made a soldier."

"Indeed, my lad? You must have rendered some signal service. Since you no longer fear me as an enemy, for I am not formidable now that I am the only member of the English army this side of New Jersey, perhaps you will tell me what you did which won for you so great an honor."

Enoch, passing lightly over the incidents in which he figured prominently, told the story of his having been recognized by the Quaker and of subsequently hearing Clinton's order read.

Lord Gordon laughed heartily at the boy's account of his freeing himself from the Quaker's grasp; but grew grave as the story was finished.

"With such boys as you, Enoch, to recruit the American army, it is little wonder that we fail to whip you into submission. I am glad to know you, my lad, and would say the same even if you had not rendered me so great a service. I venture to predict you will win your way in the army, for surely no boy ever made a better beginning. I hope we shan't meet on the battlefield; but if we do of course each must strive for the mastery, and I am confident you will do your best to overcome me. Here is what I want you to accept," and Lord Gordon unfastened from his watch a heavy chain.

"That is far too valuable, sir. I had rather have something more trifling."

"And I prefer to give this. Don't refuse to take it, Enoch, for you will be doing me another favor by wearing it."

It was necessary Enoch should cease rowing sufficiently long to put the costly gift in his pocket, and then he bent himself sturdily to the oars once more, remaining silent several moments before he said:

"I thank you, Lord Gordon, for the chain; but I thank you more for your kind words. If all the Britishers had been like you I don't think this war would have lasted so long."

"And if all the Americans had been as generous-hearted and brave as you, Enoch Ball, your independence would have been gained immediately after it was declared."

Then the boat's bow grated on the sand of the Jersey shore.

His lordship's servant gathered up the belongings and proceeded with all haste toward the moving column which could be seen in the distance, and Lord Gordon, pressing Enoch's hand, said solemnly:

"May God love and guard you, my boy!" *

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*This escape of Lord Cosmo Gordon occurred actually as described, and the gift of the chain was made to the boy who assisted him.

CHAPTER XV.

ON SPECIAL DUTY.

When Enoch had repaid the debt of gratitude by aiding Lord Gordon to rejoin his troops, and had landed once more on the Philadelphia side of the river, he felt particularly well pleased with the morning's work.

It was, to his mind, a fitting conclusion to the evacuation, and gave him a sense of great satisfaction that he had been enabled to be of service to the generous officer.

"I allow Seth will be pleased twice when he hears of this day's happenings, and I'm not certain but that what we have done for Lord Gordon will afford him nearly as much pleasure as to know that the British have finally left town. I wish he had given me something of less value than this chain," he added as he examined the ornament more closely. "It seems as if this was in some sense payment for the work, although he insisted it was simply to remember him by. However, I could not have refused it."

Then he returned to Drinker's Alley; informed Mrs. Graydon her late guest was in a place of safety, and, that having been done, went directly home to

acquaint his mother with the events of the evacuation.

As a matter of course he was on the street when General Arnold, still suffering from the wound received at Saratoga, entered the city with a force of men sufficient to hold it against any ordinary attack, and as soon as the town was formally invested by its rightful rulers he went back to Letitia Street, there to remain until word should be received regarding his future movements.

Enoch's one desire now was to join the army at the earliest possible moment, and he hoped most fervently that he would be allowed to enlist, for there seemed every reason to believe General Washington would attack the British forces during their march across New Jersey.

Late on this same afternoon it was told in the city that Clinton was encamped with his army and camp-followers at Haddonfield, and so lengthy was the train with its appendages that the first division of the force had bivouacked before the last left Gloucester Point, although the line had moved in close order.

It was reported that when the soldiers, the bat-horses, baggage and ammunition wagons, the camp-followers and refugees were stretched out on a single road in marching order, they extended a length of twelve miles, and there seemed to be no question but that the American forces would sadly harass the cumbersome column before it could arrive at its destination.

There was great rejoicing in Philadelphia on this first night of the re-occupation by the Continental army.

Those who had been imprisoned because of their devotion to the cause were set free, and for the first time since September was there feasting and joy in the homes of the citizens who ardently desired the independence of the colonies.

It was noon of the 19th when Enoch received the expected summons, and then, to his surprise and delight, Greene entered the house.

"I came with an order from General Arnold," he said in reply to Enoch's eager question, "and you are to carry a message from him to General Dickinson, while I return to the main army."

"Has Washington moved from Valley Forge?"

"Certainly. He started for Coryell's Ferry* last night. Day before yesterday Generals Maxwell and Dickinson left camp in order to be ready to harass the enemy during his march, and are now somewhere near the river; but it is impossible to say just at what point they may be found. You are to report to General Arnold at once, and will be furnished by him with a horse and equipment in order to enable you to reach the New Jersey troops. Clinton, so it is reported, left Haddonfield this morning, moving in the direction of Mount Holly, and the general impression is that he intends to pass through New Brunswick. Keep that fact well in

* Now Lambertville.

mind, for it is somewhere on the west side of his line that you will find General Dickinson, and you must not approach sufficiently near to run the risk of being captured."

"What am I to do after the message has been delivered?" Enoch asked.

"That I cannot say."

"Am I to be allowed to enlist?"

"The order which General Washington gave at Valley Forge is still in force, and you will most likely be considered an aid so long as your services are required—very likely until the army is united. Now I propose to ask your mother for a dinner, although there is no lack of rations in the Continental camp; but it is the last opportunity I shall have for some time of enjoying her extraordinarily good cooking. You must tuck a generous meal under your vest this day, because you won't get another like it for many days to come."

As a matter of course Enoch told his friend of the previous morning's adventures, when he had aided Lord Gordon, and after the story was finished Greene said emphatically:

"It was a good day's work you did, lad, and that is a precious deal more than I would say if you'd helped any other British officer out of town. Gordon, even though he is a lord and an enemy, is an honest kind of a man, and after the spirit he has shown I'd be sorry to see him a prisoner."

Then Greene, observing the expression of sadness on Mrs. Ball's face as she realized that her son was

about to leave her once more, and would probably be exposed to all the dangers of battle, began to talk on indifferent subjects in order to prevent the thoughts of mother and son from dwelling upon the possibilities of disaster, succeeding so well in his purpose that when the moment for departure arrived both were in a reasonably calm frame of mind.

The spy did not allow any prolonged leave-taking, but hurried Enoch away immediately, saying as he left the house :

"You may depend upon it, Mrs. Ball, that you will receive the earliest possible information of our movements, and I have no doubt but that Enoch will return to the city several times before any engagement can ensue. At all events, remember that nothing serious is likely to occur, so far as the army is concerned, for several days. Clinton, owing to his unwieldy train, must of necessity move slowly, and General Washington will not attack until everything is in our favor."

Then he literally forced Enoch from the house, hurrying him so rapidly toward General Arnold's headquarters that the boy was listening to that officer's instructions almost before he fairly realized he had left home to take part in a campaign.

The duty which was now required of him seemed very slight. He was simply to carry a written communication to General Dickinson, and consider himself under that officer's orders after the task had been performed.

Directions were given that he be furnished with

a proper equipment, and in the selection of this Greene took an active part, insisting on several articles which Enoch thought needless; critically examining all that was turned over to the boy, and discarding this or that until satisfied in every respect with the complete outfit.

"I'm rigged out like a nabob!" Enoch said proudly when Greene announced that, everything having been provided, there was no necessity for further delay. "If all the soldiers in the army have as much, I can only wonder where Congress finds the money with which to pay for the goods."

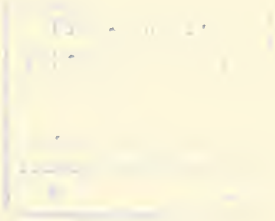
"You are rather more generously equipped than the privates," Greene said with a laugh as he assisted the boy to mount. "This horse with his trappings, the two pistols in your belt, and the purse of money, come to you by right of your being on General Washington's staff."

"But you know I don't really hold that position, Mr. Greene, and oughtn't have any more than belongs to me as a private."

"You have received only what is absolutely necessary to permit of your doing the duty required. You may be several days finding General Dickinson, in which case you must lodge at inns, and will need the wherewithal to pay your reckoning. Remember, Enoch, my boy, that although the British have left Philadelphia, they are not very far away from the town, and if you should chance to be made prisoner the situation would be quite as grave as if the old Quaker had succeeded in retain-

THE SPY STRUCK THE HORSE, CAUSING THE ANIMAL TO LEAP FORWARD SO SUDDENLY THAT THE YOUNG COURIER WAS NEARLY UNSEATED.

Washington at Monmouth, p. 229.



ing his hold of your ear. Be careful of yourself; don't trust any one too far, unless you know beyond a question that he is a true friend to the cause, and keep your eyes wide open for treachery wherever you may be."

"How long are you going to stay here?"

"I intend to leave very shortly, and it is not impossible we shall soon meet again. You've got a good horse, lad, one that will serve you if endurance is required, or I'm no judge. Be careful of him at the outset, for the time may come when his speed and bottom will be needed for your own safety. We won't say good-by, for now that you're in the service it seems best to dispense with anything of that kind. Be off with you, and don't show yourself too suddenly to Jacob, or he'll die of envy at seeing you in this rig."

The spy struck the horse on the flank with his open hand, causing the animal to leap forward so suddenly that the young courier was nearly unseated.

General Arnold had instructed Enoch to follow up the highway to Badger's Point, where he would find facilities for crossing, and to act with confidence upon such advice regarding the whereabouts of the New Jersay troops as might be given him by the ferryman, who was a true friend to the cause.

Enoch rode leisurely as Greene had suggested; but before arriving at his destination it became necessary to urge his horse at a faster pace, for it was difficult to pass by the country people living on the

road and not stop sufficiently long, in response to their urgent entreaties, to tell them the news.

Although these halts were no longer than absolutely necessary in order to give the desired information, they occupied considerable time, and it was nearly dark when the boy had finished the first stage of the journey.

"Yes, I allow I can ferry you across; but you'll have to swim the horse," the man to whom he had been directed said when Enoch made known his desire. "Have all the Britishers left the city?"

"The last one went before eleven o'clock," Enoch replied, able to speak with certainty as to the time since he had assisted very materially in the departure.

"I allow it'll be many a long day before they're back—leastways that's what I hope. Better take the saddle off, otherwise it'll be soaked. Now lead the horse into the water alongside the boat, and I reckon we can make him swim without any great trouble."

When the skiff was pushed off from the shore, the horse following as if accustomed to acting as his own ferryman, the owner of the craft plied Enoch with questions as vigorously as he worked at the oars, and not until they had landed on the opposite side did the boy have an opportunity of asking regarding the whereabouts of the New Jersey troops.

"You're within three miles of where they allowed to halt to-night. General Dickinson is making for Mount Holly, so I'm told, reckoning the

Britishers will strike that place in their march across the State. Keep straight on the road ahead, and you'll hit them before dark, or I'm a Dutchman."

The young courier gave rein to his horse now that the journey appeared so nearly at an end, for he was not only eager to deliver the message, but to be with friends.

The idea of riding around the country at night, knowing that he might at any moment come across detachments of the enemy, was anything rather than pleasing, and he had not been in the service sufficiently long to look upon such matters as ordinary incidents in a soldier's life.

At the end of ten minutes he saw ample signs betokening the passage of a large body of men, and at the end of half an hour drew rein in the midst of the New Jersey forces, who had bivouacked in a pine grove near the main road.

It was not as simple a matter as he had supposed to gain an audience with General Dickinson.

When he was halted by the pickets he fancied that immediately he announced himself as a messenger from General Arnold he would be allowed to proceed at will, instead of which he was detained by the vigilant outpost until the officer of the day could be communicated with, and during fully an hour Enoch sat on his horse, fretting because of the delay, and believing he would have received different treatment if he had been in the garb of a soldier.

The night had come before he was conducted to where General Dickinson was partaking of a supper consisting of cold corn-bread and smoked fish, in company with several of his staff.

Enoch saluted awkwardly, and as he held the bridle of his horse with one hand, extended General Arnold's letter in the other, without speaking.

"Where are you from, my lad?" the general asked as he took the missive, but without looking at it.

"Philadelphia, sir."

"Haven't I met you before?"

"Yes, sir; I am the boy who went into town with Greene before the British left."

"And because of a stroke of rare good fortune at a time when beset by enemies were enabled to bring important information?"

"Yes, sir."

"As a member of General Washington's staff," and there was a curious smile on Dickinson's face as he spoke, "it is proper I invite you to mess with my aids. My orderly will care for your horse."

"If you please, sir, I had rather look out for him myself, and as for rations, I can get them anywhere. I don't fancy the commander-in-chief really meant that I was an aid. It seemed to be only a question of my getting rations at the time."

"And that is all it is just now, lad. Help yourself, if you are hungry. Take care of your own horse if you choose; in fact do whatever pleases

you during the night. I shall send you on to the main army in the morning."

Enoch bowed, wheeled his horse around and started off irresolutely, not knowing exactly in which direction to proceed, until the general's orderly overtook him and said in a kindly tone:

"If you will follow me, my boy, I will show you where to get provender for your horse and rations for yourself."

"I have two friends somewhere among this force, and would like to find them."

"They are in the same company with Greene, the spy, are they not?"

"Yes, sir."

"You will find them over here to the right. Suppose you let me take the beast? The general's servants will care for him as well as you could. You need have no fear, so far as he is concerned, for he will fare better than you will, I am afraid."

Enoch hesitated just an instant before doing as the orderly suggested, and had but just released the bridle-rein when Seth and Jacob came running up.

Turning toward his friends with a cry of joy, Enoch clasped their hands as if he had never expected to see them again, and Master Ludwick asked in a suspicious tone:

"Where did you get that horse?"

"At General Arnold's headquarters."

"Did you swap him for the beast we took from Wharton's stable?"

"Certainly not; that one was turned over to the army at the same time yours was."

"But how does it happen you are riding, and what are you doing here?"

"I came with a message from General Arnold to General Dickinson."

"Then you *are* an aid?" and Jacob spoke in a tone of envy.

"Indeed I am not! I'm going to enlist at the very first chance; but of course I had to bring this message, and must go to the main army to-morrow. When that has been done, however, I shall sign the rolls in order to be with you fellows."

"If you ride around on horseback, carrying messages from one general to the other, of course you are an aid," Jacob began petulantly, and then, as if ashamed of himself for showing his ill-temper because his comrade had been favored, he added: "Who knows what Seth and I will be after the battle is over, for we are bound to have one mighty soon, and then there will be plenty of chances where a fellow can earn a commission."

"You allow that to fret you not a little, Jacob," Seth said reprovingly. "It is the good of the cause you should consider—nothing else."

"I can do all that is in my power for the cause, and still keep my eyes open for a commission," Master Ludwick replied stoutly. "If I had been allowed to go to Philadelphia with Enoch and Greene, things would have been different."

"But isn't being a soldier in the Continental army enough for you?" Enoch asked.

"No, it isn't, and you will find that it ain't enough for you when you get here. I want to do what I can for the cause, and am as anxious as any fellow could be; but after you've stayed around the encampment a spell you'll see that a private don't count for very much, except——"

Master Ludwick was interrupted by the coming of one of General Dickinson's staff, who halted in front of the boys as he asked:

"Are either of you acquainted in this section of the country?"

"Seth and I were over it a good bit last fall," Jacob said.

"Are you boys willing to perform a little extra service?"

Jacob replied very promptly in the affirmative. If he could always be detailed for "extra service" he would be quite content with his lot.

"General Dickinson wants to send some one toward Mount Holly, and he would prefer that whoever goes should volunteer."

"We are ready," Seth said as the officer paused. "What is to be done?"

"The proposition simply is to lounge along the road in an apparently aimless fashion, and, if the enemy are not too near to render it dangerous, enter Mount Holly. The purpose is to learn in which direction Clinton proposes to march from that town, and whether the scout be successful or not, it is

necessary you should return to the command within forty-eight hours."

"When are we to start?" Jacob asked.

"At once. You are to go on foot, and wear nothing which might indicate that you belong to the army."

"Then we are to act as spies," Enoch said in a tone of disappointment.

"No, lad, nothing of the kind, for it is not your purpose to enter the enemy's lines. You will simply be an independent scouting party. If you are willing to perform this work I will wait until your preparations have been made in order to pass you out."

"That won't take many minutes," Master Ludwick replied, and now all traces of his ill-humor had vanished. If he was to be engaged in active service, rather than confined to the dull routine of the camp, it was to him a most desirable change. "I suppose we are not to carry weapons?"

"Certainly not. Discard everything which might give those whom you meet the impression that you are soldiers."

In less than ten minutes the boys were being escorted out past the pickets, and Enoch said to the officer in an apologetic tone:

"I am sorry to give so much trouble, sir, but would you see to it that some one looks after my horse and the equipment I have left?"

"All your belongings shall be cared for, my boy. Now one last word: It is not impossible that we may

be on the march to-morrow; but you will have no trouble in finding the command. Be prudent; don't take unnecessary risks for the purpose of gaining information, and remember that your errand will have been well performed when you know in which direction General Clinton intends to march after leaving Mount Holly."

Then the boys, saluting, walked rapidly down the road in the darkness, and Jacob said in a tone of satisfaction:

"Now this is what I call the proper kind of a job! I am more than willing to do a thing of this sort; but hanging around the camp, carrying a musket first in one fashion and then another, is what I don't like."

"Yet it is necessary you should know how to do such things before you can call yourself a soldier," Seth suggested. "I suppose you had supper with General Dickinson, Enoch?"

"Indeed I didn't," Master Ball replied, "and I feel as if I could eat almost anything."

"Do you mean to say you haven't had food since you left Philadelphia?"

"Yes."

"But why didn't you say something about it before we left camp?"

"Because it seemed necessary we should start without delay, and I didn't want to appear so girlish as to declare I must have something to eat when there was work to be done."

"I don't call that girlish. A fellow must have a full stomach or he can't do much work."

"We'll get something after awhile. You see we've money between us, now, for General Arnold gave me two pounds before I left, and since it was to be used in the service, I shall be able to get what supplies are needed."

"Let's stop at the first respectable-looking house we see," Seth suggested. "It is getting so late that anything of the kind must be done before the people go to bed, for I don't fancy our reception would be very pleasant if we awakened any one with the proposition to sell us food."

"We won't do that yet awhile. I reckon I can do without my supper two or three hours."

"But you see," and Jacob halted suddenly, "General Dickinson couldn't have intended that we should travel all night, for there is nothing to be learned while everybody is in bed."

"I should suppose if we walked until midnight we would be somewhere near Mount Holly, and then the proper course will be to ask for lodgings at a farmhouse, unless we come across an inn."

With this understanding the boys continued on at a reasonably rapid pace, discussing as they walked the probability of a battle in the near future.

Before they had traveled the length of time agreed upon, lights, apparently of a town, could be seen in the distance ahead, and Seth said in surprise:

"I thought Mount Holly was very much further

away; but I must have been mistaken, for there's no question about that's being the town. Do you think it is safe for us to go there before daylight?"

"Why not?" Jacob asked.

"Because if the Britishers intend to strike that place, we may find ourselves in trouble."

"We'd better stay where we are until morning," Enoch suggested. "Suppose we try to get lodgings in that house?" and he pointed a short distance ahead on the right, where could be seen dimly in the darkness a collection of buildings.

With never a thought in their minds that they might meet with enemies quite as dangerous as could be found in the British army, the boys turned into the lane leading from the main road, and went rapidly toward the house.

CHAPTER XVI.

TORY HOSPITALITY.

ALTHOUGH there were no lights to be seen from the outside, the boys soon learned that the inmates of the dwelling were not asleep, for in response to Jacob's vigorous knocking the door was opened after a delay of only a few seconds, and a voice asked:

"What do you want?"

The speaker had brought no light with him, and, shrouded in the dense darkness of the hallway, it was impossible for the boys to distinguish even the form of their host. As a matter of fact, it was only owing to the tone of his voice that they understood a man was before them.

"We want shelter till morning; some food if you can give it to us without too much trouble, and are willing to pay for all we receive," Jacob replied promptly.

"Who are you? Where did you come from?"

"I am Jacob Ludwick——"

"Chris, the baker's son, eh?"

"Yes, sir," and Master Ludwick was proud, rather than displeased, that his identity should be known.

"What are you doing here?"

"We're on our way to Mount Holly."

"Why don't you keep on to the town?"

"We thought it would be safer to wait until morning, because the Britishers may be near there by this time."

Both Seth and Enoch pressed nearer their comrade to warn him against being too free with details regarding himself; but he did not understand the movement.

It was as if he believed all the people in the country round about Philadelphia were friends to the cause, and he was perfectly willing to give any information desired.

"How near are your troops?"

"They must be at least ten miles back," Jacob replied, and again his comrades pressed closer to him, while this time Seth whispered:

"Be careful what you say!"

"You can come in," the man said after a brief pause, "and I'll see if it is possible to give you lodgings. Wait here until I get a candle," he added as the boys entered the hall, and the outer door was closed and barred.

The sound of footsteps told that their host had gone in search of a light, and Seth took advantage of the opportunity to say in a low tone:

"You had no right to answer his questions, Jacob. How do you know but that he may be a Tory?"

"It isn't likely."

"Why not? There are as many in Jersey as in

Pennsylvania, and you have told him where our troops are."

Jacob made no reply. He now understood how reckless he had been, and was chagrined at the idea of making a grievous mistake almost before they had begun their work.

"There is no reason why you should feel badly about it now," Enoch said, understanding the cause of his friend's silence. "We can look out for ourselves, I reckon, and there has been no real harm done even though he carried the information you gave him directly to General Clinton, for it isn't likely General Dickinson fancies he can keep his whereabouts a secret."

"Still I ought to have been more careful," Jacob replied penitently. "I should——"

The door at the extreme end of the hall was opened, and the man entered, holding a candle in his hand.

"I will show you to a room where you can remain until morning, and afterward bring you some food. Follow me," and he ascended the stairs which led out of the hall. "These are troublesome times, and one should be cautious about letting strangers into his house; but I don't fancy you three boys are disposed to do mischief."

"Indeed we're not," Seth replied. "We simply want a place in which to sleep, and shall go away very early in the morning. Perhaps it is too much to ask that you bring the food to our room?"

"Oh, no; I would have invited you into the

kitchen, but we have sickness in the house, and it isn't well there should be any noise. Are the Continentals coming this way?"

"I don't know."

"But you have just left them."

"We have come from where the troops were," Seth replied cautiously.

"And don't belong to the army?"

Seth hesitated sufficiently long for the most obtuse to have understood that he was about to equivocate, and then said:

"If we were soldiers we should be in uniform, and wouldn't ask for lodgings."

"Exactly; I see," the man replied with a curious smile, and continued on up the second flight of stairs into what was evidently the attic of the house.

On this floor was a long, narrow passage with doors opening from either side; but the host did not pause until arriving at the extreme end, when he ushered them into a small apartment, saying as he did so:

"This is the only room we have empty to-night; but so long as the bed is rest-inviting I suppose it will answer your purpose. I'll bring the food at once."

Placing the candle on the rude table, the host left the room, and the boys listened until from the sound of his footsteps they knew he had traversed the passage, and was descending the stairs.

"He has taken precious good care we shall be well out of the way," Seth said thoughtfully as he

looked around the apartment, in which was a low trundle-bed covered with the coarsest of clothing, a small, rude table on which the candle had been placed, and one stool.

There were no windows in the room, and the door was formed of heavy planks, bolted rather than nailed together.

"He said some one in the house was sick, and most likely we have been brought up here for fear we might make a noise," Enoch suggested.

Seth opened the door cautiously, and holding the candle high above his head, looked out.

A heavy iron socket on either side and a third upon the door itself, with a stout oaken bar lying on the floor of the hallway near by, told that this particular apartment could be fastened very securely.

"What is the meaning of all this?" Jacob asked in dismay.

"It looks as if some one had been here who wasn't allowed to come out except at the pleasure of the master of the house," Enoch replied doubtfully, and an expression of fear came over Jacob's face.

"I don't think we had better stop in this place," Master Ludwick said decidedly. "I was such an idiot as to tell him who we are, and in case this happens to be a Tory dwelling, we may have trouble."

"It doesn't seem just right to walk out simply because we have seen that the door can be barred from the outside," Seth replied slowly.

"But you noticed how anxious the man was to learn about our troops?"

"So would anybody be, whether Whig or Tory, knowing that there is probably an army on either side of him."

"I think we had better leave while we've got the chance," Jacob said in something very like fear. "There is no need of taking any risks, and I am certain there must be other vacant rooms in the house besides this one. Let us go downstairs softly, and, if possible, get out of doors without making a noise."

At that instant, as if to show the boys it was too late for them to retreat, the sound of footsteps was heard once more, and a moment later the master of the house, or he who acted in that capacity, entered the room bearing a generous supply of provisions and a jug of water.

"Here is the best I can do for you, lads," he said in a kindly tone, placing his burden on the table. "If you are hungry this won't come amiss, and in case your appetites are not keen, there will be no harm in allowing the food to remain untouched. Shall I call you in the morning?"

"We would like to leave here by daylight, sir, and will thank you for awakening us in case we oversleep."

Then the host left the room with a cheery "good-night," and the boys gazed at each other until a smile overspread the faces of all.

"I allow we were more scared than hurt," Jacob

said in a tone of relief. "He has done what we asked, and in a very friendly fashion. If it hadn't been for the bar that can be fitted on the door, I never should have thought anything might be wrong."

Seth held up his hand to demand silence, and the three could hear the footsteps of their host as he went through the passage.

Enoch, who had not tasted of food since noon, and whose appetite was keen owing to the long ride and yet longer walk, began an attack upon the vegetables, in which he was soon joined by his comrades.

A very satisfactory meal did the three make, and as hunger was appeased their suspicions sank at rest, until, when the repast was ended, there remained no thought in the mind of either that harm could be intended.

"It is time we went to bed if we count on getting any sleep to-night," Seth said as he began to make his preparations for retiring. "Judging from the looks of the lights, we are within half a mile of Mount Holly, and should be able to get there before many people are stirring. Say, push open that door, will you, Enoch? We must have fresh air in some way and that seems to be the only chance, since there is no window."

Enoch took hold of the latch carelessly, and then with more determination, as the door failed to open.

"What is the matter?" Jacob asked, noting the look of fear on his comrade's face, and advancing

until his hand also was on the latch. "Why, it's locked!"

"That was the way it seemed to me," Enoch replied, displaying considerably less agitation than did Jacob, and Seth turned sharply around to look into the faces of the two at the door.

"Yes, it is locked," Enoch continued quietly as if in reply to Seth's question. "We had good reason to be suspicious when we saw that bar on the outside, and knew there were no windows."

"But what is the meaning of it?" Jacob cried sharply.

"It means that we are in the house of a Tory, who, knowing we have come from General Dickinson's force, and making a very good guess as to our business, proposes to keep us here until our report will be of but little value."

"He wouldn't dare do such a thing," Jacob cried angrily. "When it is known that he has made prisoners of messengers sent from General Dickinson the soldiers will tear his house down about his ears."

"It may be he intends to join the Britishers as they come along, in which case he wouldn't be the first Tory to leave home rather than submit to American rule."

Seth, having ascertained beyond a doubt that they were locked into the room, was at once plunged in deep thought, and, observing this, Jacob asked quickly, almost angrily:

"What do you think about it? Are you going

to stay here without making any fight to get out?"

"I don't believe we should accomplish very much, however hard we might fight, unless we can devise some better plan of operations than that of attempting to batter the door down," Seth replied quietly. "And as to what I think about it, I have already said. Of course the man who owns the house is a Tory who counts on helping the Britishers by preventing us to return with the report to General Dickinson."

"And you are willing to stay here quietly?"

"I can't say I am willing."

"But you don't seem likely to do anything toward helping yourself and us," and now Master Ludwick displayed unmistakable signs of temper. "I'll show that old Tory what it means to play such a trick on members of the army!"

He was so enraged that he failed to realize how useless would be his efforts; but seizing the stool, began to batter upon the heavy door with all his strength, continuing at this vain work until he was absolutely exhausted.

Then he threw himself upon the bed, still literally beside himself with rage, and Enoch said soothingly:

"There's no use flying into a passion, Jacob, for that won't help us in any way."

"I have let that miserable Tory know we understand how he has tricked us."

"Yes, and put him on his guard. Until you did

that he might have supposed we were ignorant that the door was locked, and would have rested contentedly. Now he understands exactly how we are feeling, and will be on the alert to prevent an escape."

"It is not necessary for him to watch out very sharp, for we can't accomplish anything more than I have done already."

"And that is simply to dent the door, and splinter the stool."

"Well, what better can *you* do?" and Jacob leaped to his feet as if ready for a pitched battle.

"That's what I can't say. Very likely I shall do no more—I certainly can't do any less."

"Now look here, fellows, what's the sense of quarreling?" Seth asked. "We're prisoners; came into this trap of our own free will, and one is no more to blame than another. It strikes me our best plan is to be at least friendly among ourselves, for ill-temper won't weaken the door, or show us the way out."

"I am not angry, nor haven't been," Enoch replied. "When Jacob was so foolish I simply answered his questions, that is all."

Master Ludwick made no reply. He realized that, although his companions were careful not to accuse him, there was more reason why he should be blamed than either of his comrades, since he it was who had supplied the master of the house with such information as was desired.

Jacob was not willing to confess he had been

careless, and seemed angry because his comrades refrained from mentioning the fact. He threw himself once more upon the bed in a sulky fashion, while Seth and Enoch, the latter holding the candle, walked slowly around the apartment, examining every portion of the walls.

"It doesn't seem as if we could work our way out of here," Seth said when the examination was concluded, and nothing had met their gaze but the unbroken partitions of heavy boards.

"This room must be directly at the end of the house," Enoch said half to himself.

"I reckon there can be no question about that."

"Do you suppose it would be possible to cut our way through with knives? I have a stout one in my pocket."

"We might, in time, if no one molested us, but it is terrible to think we might be forced to remain here so long."

"It is evident we shan't get out very soon," Enoch said after a pause. "I propose that we try to get some sleep. I was awake nearly all last night, and have had a hard day's work. We won't gain anything by tearing around just now, and a night's rest may put us in better shape for thinking."

"It doesn't seem as if there was anything else to do," Seth replied, and immediately laid down on the bed by the side of Jacob, Enoch following his example.

Despite the gravity of their situation, all three of the boys were soon wrapped in the unconsciousness

of slumber, nor did they awaken until the closing of the door brought them to a sitting posture very suddenly.

"Some one has been in here!" Jacob exclaimed as he leaped to his feet, and seized the latch.

The door was fastened as securely as before.

The darkness was profound, and for some moments the boys were at a loss to understand it until Enoch said with a mirthless laugh:

"The candle has burned up, that's all. We should have blown it out before we went to sleep."

"How much good would that have done us?" Seth asked grimly. "We have got neither flint nor steel with which to light it again."

"I thought last night that we were about as bad off as possible; but this being forced to remain in darkness seems to make matters worse."

Groping around to learn the reason for the visit, Enoch ascertained that a supply of food and water had been left on the table, and he said, as he mentioned this fact to his comrades:

"Here is evidence that we are to be kept prisoners until it is no longer possible to gain any information concerning the movements of the Britishers. It must be morning, even though it's dark, for I don't think the Tory would have paid us a second visit during the night."

Jacob appeared to have recovered from the fit of ill-temper which had assailed him, and now said as he examined the supply of provisions:

"If it is morning we may as well have breakfast.

I wish one of us had a watch so we could have some idea of time, for we shan't see daylight while we are cooped up here."

Seth was in as despondent a mood as a boy well can be, when he arose from the bed to act upon his companion's suggestion; but each was careful not to let the others understand how hopeless seemed the situation in this first moment of awakening.

Neither of the prisoners ate with much relish, and the meal was quickly finished.

Then each gave himself up to his own gloomy reflections, and after remaining silent nearly half an hour, Enoch said sharply:

"Look here, boys, it doesn't seem possible that we can get out of this place unaided; but at the same time we shall all feel better if we are doing something, instead of mooning like this. Now let's decide upon a plan and go to work."

"I am willing to begin any job, however hopeless it seems, rather than remain idle," Seth replied promptly. "Do you still think there is a chance of cutting our way through the end of the house?"

"No; that now seems to me less likely than a good many other plans. Why not try to raise some of the flooring?"

"But suppose you succeed?" Jacob asked. "You wouldn't be out of the house."

"True, and we should still be inside if we were in the hallway; yet I had a good deal rather be

there than locked up here. I'm willing to attempt anything. There is little hope of our succeeding; but at the same time it is better to make some effort."

"One plan is as good as another," Seth said after a brief pause. "Tell us what you want to do, Enoch, and Jacob and I will assist to the best of our ability."

"We all have knives, and plenty of time. Now, suppose we cut through one of the boards of the floor, at a sufficient distance from the end to avoid striking the joist, and we should be able to pull it up once it has been separated."

"But that is a job on which only one can work."

"We will make two divisions. I'll work near the wall, while one of you begin three feet away from me," Enoch said as he went toward the side of the room. "I can feel the nails here, and will allow that the joist extends two or three inches beyond them. Hunt for the second row of nails, and set about cutting. It is lucky we've all got knives."

Five minutes later Enoch and Seth were busily engaged in the task, while Jacob stood ready to "spell" the first who should grow weary.

The boards were planed, and, as nearly as could be judged, were of ordinary thickness.

"It is pine wood, that's one satisfaction," Enoch said cheerily, "and it shouldn't take long to lift one piece. Then we shall have something to serve as a lever, if we want to rip out more of the flooring."

"That part of it is true enough; but even when we have taken up as much as necessary, we are about the same distance from the open air," Jacob added. "What is your plan if we succeed in this work?"

"I am willing, if you fellows will back me, to break through the plastering, for of course we shall come upon the ceiling of the room below, and then jump down, ready to fight our way out."

"We shan't be able to do a great deal of fighting without weapons."

"By pulling the bed apart we can get what will answer as clubs, and unless there are a number of men in the house we ought to accomplish something."

"It is a bold scheme," Seth replied; "but I am not certain there isn't a fair chance for success in it."

"Unless the man of the house is well supplied with weapons, in which case our clubs would amount to very little."

"We'll do the best we can, and not discuss as to how we may be stopped. It was agreed when we began that this was to be done only for the purpose of helping pass the time."

Enoch's cheerfulness had a beneficial effect upon his companions, and during the next hour Jacob refrained from suggesting difficulties which might be encountered.

Then came the time when one end of the board was severed, it having been literally whittled apart.

It was Enoch who first accomplished his portion

of the task, and Seth had so nearly finished that by bending this particular piece downward it was readily broken off.

Reaching through into the aperture, and exploring by sense of touch, Enoch announced that there was probably nothing between them and the apartment below save narrow strips of inch-thick lumber and plaster.

"By taking up one more board we shall have space enough, and I think it will be best to use this piece to pry the other out."

Owing to the woodwork at the side of the room this plan was found to be impracticable, and once more Enoch went to work with his knife.

Not until another hour had passed was the task finished, and then, regardless of the noise, the boys pried the board from its place.

When this had been done they waited in silence several moments, to ascertain if an alarm had been given, and, hearing nothing, Enoch set about dismantling the bed in order to get possession of the posts as weapons.

This was neither a difficult nor a lengthy task, and when he had given each of his comrades a stout oaken timber, from three to four feet in length, he exclaimed:

"Now we are ready, boys! Once we begin there must be no delay. Punch a hole through the ceiling, and then we'll drop down regardless of what may happen, fighting our best when we are once where anything of that kind is possible."

CHAPTER XVII.

IN SELF-DEFENSE.

Although the youngest of the party, Enoch was looked upon as leader, probably because the idea was his and because he appeared so certain it could be carried through to a successful issue.

"We'll keep right at your back, no matter how foolhardy you may be," Seth whispered as Enoch hesitated.

"I know I can count on you fellows; but the thought has just come into my mind that perhaps one or more may be lamed by jumping through the hole after it has been made. What is to be done then? It seems to me important General Dickinson should know we cannot carry out his orders."

"So it is, and if one is disabled he who is in the best condition must push on to the camp. Two shall stay together here, and the third go back if possible."

"Are you ready?" Enoch asked nervously as he raised his weapon.

"As nearly now as we ever shall be," Seth replied, and in another instant there came a resounding crash as tiny particles of plaster rose in the air.

Enoch had struck the first blow, and his club

opened a hole sufficiently large to admit daylight, thus rendering it possible for the boys to see each other.

Jacob and Seth followed his example, and only three blows were needed, for the barrier had been torn away to such an extent that there was ample space for all three of them to leap down at the same time.

"It isn't more than fifteen feet," Enoch said as he looked into the apartment below. "Of course there are chances we may come to grief; but we mustn't stop to think of them. There has been so much noise that the owner of the house cannot fail to know what is being done."

"We'll follow you," Seth replied.

Throwing his club down, Enoch followed, striking the floor with a thud that must have been heard throughout the building.

"Come on! It's all right!" he shouted.

Seth followed his example.

Jacob dropped his weapon, but hesitated before making the leap. The distance looked very great as viewed from above, and the landing-place particularly hard.

"Come on!" Seth cried excitedly. "We can't afford to waste time now, for the Tory is bound to know what is being done, and we must be out of this room before he gets here!"

Jacob was unquestionably afraid; but the sound of hurried footsteps on the stairs told that it must be done quickly, or not at all, and he let himself

down by the hands, dropping to his feet from that lessened height.

Enoch did not wait to learn if his comrade made the descent in safety; each instant the noise of the footsteps sounded louder, and, holding his club ready for immediate use, he threw open the door.

The same man whom they had seen the evening previous was in the hallway, running toward them.

He raised his hand, leveling a pistol full at Enoch's head.

"Get back there, you rebel spawn!" he cried in a rage. "Get back, or I'll fire!"

"Come on, Seth!" Enoch shouted, and he flung his club at the Tory, dropping to the floor instantly he did so.

The weapon was discharged at the same interval of time that its owner's arm was thrown upward by the club, and the odds were more even.

"Close in on him now!" Enoch cried as he leaped to his feet and darted forward.

It was as if the boy no longer gave heed to possible danger; the one idea in his mind was that General Dickinson must be told why his order was not obeyed, and he paid no attention to himself, but prayed that at least one of the party might succeed in leaving the house uninjured.

The infuriated Tory struck out with his fist, hitting the boy such a blow as sent him staggering against the wall; but Seth's prompt action turned the tide of battle.

As Enoch was forced back he rushed forward

with upraised club, bringing it down on the Tory's arm before he could defend himself, while Jacob closed in with a vain attempt to deal a second blow.

The man retreated, but at the same time succeeded in gaining possession of the club Enoch had thrown, and appeared a most dangerous antagonist as he stood with his back to the wall near the head of the stairs, awaiting an opportunity to deal a murderous blow.

Enoch was out of the battle only a few seconds. The partition on that side of the hallway opposite where the Tory was standing had saved him from a fall, and he at once looked around for something that would serve as a weapon.

The pistol which had fallen from the man's grasp was on the floor, and although it would not be effective against a club, might do good service at close quarters.

"Jump in on him!" Enoch cried as he rushed toward the man. "It is only necessary one of us shall get clear——"

He ceased speaking as he was forced to halt.

The Tory brandished his weapon vigorously, holding open a space directly around him, and it was certain that the first who came within reach would be permanently disabled.

"Stay where you are!" the man shouted, furious with rage. "I will kill every one, and swear to those who come in search of you that I did so while defending myself against a murderous assault made without provocation!"

"Stand back from that staircase, and there will be no need of defending yourself! We only ask for an opportunity to leave this house."

"That is what can't be done while I'm alive! Do you suppose I don't know why you came? You have been sent ahead to spy out the condition of his majesty's troops, and shall never go back to make a report. Keep your distance, I say!"

Jacob had endeavored to creep closer, thinking the Tory was not looking at him, and barely escaped a murderous blow from the club.

Although Master Ludwick did not accomplish anything himself, he opened the way for another to do so, and the battle was soon ended.

When the Tory struck at Jacob he put all his strength in the blow, and the impetus, as the weapon swung in the air meeting with no obstruction, caused him to reel and turn partially around.

At that instant, while he was not in a position to defend himself, Enoch flung the pistol as if it had been a rock, and, fortunately, hit the man full on the head.

He fell like one suddenly stricken dead, and Enoch shouted as he leaped over the prostrate body:

"Come on, boys! Keep your clubs, for there's no telling whom we may meet downstairs!"

At the same instant he seized his former weapon, and in two or three bounds was in the hall below.

Seth and Jacob followed closely at his heels, and the latter at once set about unfastening the front

door, which was not only locked, but bolted and barred.

The noise of the conflict had alarmed the other inmates of the house, and they came running into the hall with loud screams.

There was no man among them, and the boys breathed more freely.

"Keep back!" Enoch cried sternly as Seth and Jacob worked at the well-fastened door. "We have fought only for our freedom, of which that man would have deprived us, and shall strike even a woman if she attempts to prevent our leaving!"

"You have killed him!" some one shrieked, and the remainder of the group set up a series of the shrillest cries for help.

"He isn't dead!" Enoch shouted at the full strength of his lungs, forced thus to exert himself in order that his words might be heard. "He will recover his senses presently; but you are not to go to him yet," he added as two of the women attempted to pass him. "We don't intend to have another fight if it can be avoided, and it's better he lays where he is for awhile. Can't you open the door, boys?"

"There are more locks and bolts here than I ever saw before," Seth replied nervously. "This house must be a regular castle when it is closed and properly defended."

A second later, just when Enoch was beginning to fear he would really be forced to carry out his threat and strike some of the females to prevent

them from going up the stairs, Jacob flung open the barrier.

"Come on!" he cried, leaping into the open air, and his comrades did not delay following his example.

As they emerged the boys could see, far away to the right, a moving column of redcoats, and understood that the enemy was even then passing in force between this house and the town of Mount Holly.

"It stands us in hand to hark back on our trail at the best pace possible, otherwise we may fall into the Britishers' hands!" Jacob cried, running at full speed in the direction from which they had come on the night previous.

They surely had good reason to leave that neighborhood far in the rear without loss of time, for there was cause to fear that scouting parties of the enemy might make prisoners of them, and also that the Tory, recovering from his wounds, would come in pursuit with a force sufficiently large to overpower them.

"We should at least have brought pistols," Jacob said ten minutes later, when they halted at the brow of a hill to regain breath. "The idea of scouting around where there are plenty of enemies, with nothing but a bedpost as a weapon."

"We didn't have as much as that when we left camp," Seth replied with a laugh.

"I won't be caught in such a mess again, even if I am obliged to go against positive orders," and

Master Ludwick was once more allowing his rage to become the master.

"We are bound to obey orders, no matter what the command may be," Enoch said earnestly. "But it is foolish to spend time in getting angry, when we've such a long road ahead of us. Come on, boys, and now that we have so much of a start we can afford to walk instead of run; but must not halt again until we are in camp."

It was destined, however, that the discomfited scouts should not be forced to make a long journey.

After an hour's rapid traveling they were met by a squad of Continental scouts, and told that General Dickinson's force was bearing down on Mount Holly.

"Where is the general now?" Seth asked anxiously.

"Not more than two miles in the rear. Have you seen the enemy?"

"The Britishers are between here and the town."

"Did you see the whole force?"

"We didn't stop for such a critical examination," Seth replied grimly. "Just at that time we were doing our best to escape from the house of a Tory, where we'd been kept prisoners over night, and——"

"Was it a big building on the right-hand side of the road, with four poplar trees in front?" one of the men asked.

"Yes, and the door is painted green."

"I know the house well. A rank Tory by the name of Plummer lives there, and I only hope we

may be given orders to pay him a visit. I've had some dealings with that fellow myself."

Seth would have questioned the soldier as to what "dealings" he had had, but for the fact that Enoch whispered:

"We mustn't wait here to talk; the general will expect us to come to him as soon as possible."

Then, asking for and receiving more explicit directions as to where General Dickinson would be found, the boys hurried forward, and, half an hour later, were detailing their experiences to the commander.

"Not very successful on your first scout, eh?" he said with a smile when the story was finished.

"We have at least learned where the Britishers are," Seth replied grimly, "and, what is more, know that the man Plummer is not a friend of the cause."

"I think it will be a good idea to call on him when we have time. We shall bivouac here to-night, for the sun will set in less than an hour, and you boys are excused from further duty to-day. Early to-morrow morning Master Ball will report to me personally."

"I suppose that means I am to be sent back to the main army," Enoch said just a trifle petulantly when they were so far away from General Dickinson that he could not overhear the remark. "I had begun to hope I might be allowed to stay with you fellows."

"It is better to be an aid on the commander-in-

chief's staff than running around the country with the risk of being caught again as we were last night," Jacob replied, and once more he was showing unmistakable signs of envy.

"I had rather be with you, and have a chance to earn the sword you are always talking about. Just think how I shall feel if I am sent riding back and forth over the country when a battle is going on."

Seth put an end to the conversation by insisting that they find a comfortable place in which to spend the night, and after he had seen to it that his horse was not suffering from lack of care, Enoch was ready and willing to take advantage of the opportunity to sleep.

The troops were awakened an hour before daylight next morning, and as the boys obeyed the summons to "turn out," they heard the more experienced soldiers talking about the fight which was imminent.

"Is there to be a battle?" Enoch asked of a veteran.

"Hardly that yet awhile, lad; but we've been sent down here to harass the enemy, an' this 'ere early call looks as if we was about to begin our work. I reckon we can count mighty sartin on swappin' shots with the Britishers before nightfall."

"And I am to go back just when it is possible I might do something!" Enoch exclaimed to his comrades. "You will have a chance to distinguish

yourselves, while all I can do is to ride where there is no danger."

"Wait till you've seen as much service as I have, lad, an' then you'll bless your lucky stars that you're to be out of the scrimmage. It's well enough to talk 'bout the glory to be won on a battlefield while there's no enemy near; but when you see fifteen thousand or more agin your five or six hundred, the glory don't seem so great."

Master Ludwick looked as if he agreed perfectly with this remark of the veteran's.

Enoch knew he was not warranted in standing there pouring forth his complaints when he had been ordered to report at headquarters, and after such a toilet as it was possible to make, he went to the general's camp.

It seemed to his comrades that he had but just left them when he returned looking unusually glum.

"What's the matter?" Jacob asked. "Ain't you going?"

"That's just the trouble; I *am* going, and with no time to spare. It's simply a case of carrying this letter, a job that could be done as well by any girl who can ride."

"Don't make so certain of that, my son," the veteran said with an admonitory shake of the head. "There's plenty of danger in scurryin' 'round the country now, when the redcoats are scouting in every direction, and if you are overhauled there's none to help you out. Every man's duty is impor-

tant in times like these, even though he may never so much as smell burning powder."

Enoch was silenced by this remark, and, after a hurried good-by to his comrades, set off in search of his horse.

General Dickinson ordered him to ride to Valley Forge, and knowing the general direction after crossing the river, he hastened on without remembering Greene had told him the army had moved.

The result of this carelessness was that he found the winter camp deserted, and was forced to ride further in search of information.

After some difficulty he learned that General Washington's force had been put in motion immediately after Generals Maxwell and Dickinson left with orders to harass the enemy, and had intended to cross at Coryell's Ferry.

It was not until the morning of the 23d that he entered the American camp at Hopewell, and delivered the written message to the commander.

General Washington, who was riding away from the encampment, received the document without remark, and after reading it turned to one of his staff as if such a person as Enoch had never existed.

There was no opportunity for the boy to explain why he had been delayed, and he fell back to the rear of the officers, regretting more than ever that he was not a regularly enlisted private, serving in the same company with Seth and Jacob.

"I ain't fit to do such work as this, and never

should have tried," he muttered to himself. "Here I am of about as much service as a second tail would be to a dog, and shall only bungle the next thing I am called upon to do, if indeed General Washington is willing to trust me with anything else."

"Hello, lad! You're looking uncommonly glum this morning, even though you *are* riding when the rest of us are obliged to foot it, and carry our own trunks in the bargain."

A cry of glad surprise burst from Enoch's lips as he saw, on turning, Greene the spy.

"What are you doing here?" he asked, reining in his horse and leaping to the ground.

"Trying to do my duty, though it ain't no ways pleasant while the weather is so scorching hot."

"I didn't know you were in the ranks with the others."

"Why not? I'm only a private, even though I did work 'round Philadelphia during the winter, and haven't succeeded in being given a place on the staff of the commander-in-chief."

"That's exactly what was troubling me when you spoke," Enoch cried. "I am not fit for such a place, and it's lucky I'm not really an aid. I can't even ride from one town to another without making a mistake."

Then Enoch, glad of an opportunity to free his mind, told Greene of all that had happened to him, and the latter said cheerily when the story was finished:

"I don't understand you've got any good cause

to complain. That you went to Valley Forge was Dickinson's mistake, even though I did tell you the army had moved."

"But General Washington didn't even ask me why I was so long getting here, and most likely thinks I'm a regular fool."

"I'll guarantee it hasn't so much as come into his mind, or you may be positive he'd said something. I allow you'll hear from it before night."

"Is the army to remain in camp?"

"It seems that way; but it don't stand to reason we shall be idle very long. Colonel Daniel Morgan and six hundred of his command were sent yesterday to reinforce Maxwell, which looks like business, and I allow we shall all be headed for the Britishers before we're many hours older. You say Dickinson was getting ready for business when you left?"

"That is what I heard. We were called an hour before daylight, and the men were not in line when I came away."

"There's no question but that Maxwell and Dickinson will pepper Clinton in good shape before his force gets very far on their way, and when everything is to General Washington's liking we shall fall upon them."

"But what am I to do in the meanwhile, Mr. Greene?"

"Stay where you are, and mess with me, if it so happens that you're not sent for to come to headquarters."

"But I want to be in the ranks where I'll have a chance to help in the fighting."

"My boy," and now Greene was very grave, "don't fret; you'll have all of such work you could wish for, whether acting as aid or making a poor show as a private. It is your duty to take things as they come, without finding fault. Let's get back to camp and see that your horse is fed, for there's no knowing how soon you may call on him for a spell of hard work."

General Washington and his staff had disappeared in the distance, and Enoch acted upon the spy's advice at once.

The horse was given a generous breakfast, and while he was eating it the boy sat down by the side of the spy to hear what the latter had been doing since the two parted at General Arnold's headquarters.

"It isn't much of a story, lad. My work in Philadelphia being finished, I came back here to rejoin my company, but found they had left camp, therefore am forced to hang on with the others until we overtake General Dickinson, which I'm hoping we shall do before the battle——"

"Is this the boy who brought a message from Dickinson?" an officer asked as he came toward the two rapidly.

"It is," Greene replied.

"He is wanted at headquarters immediately."

The officer turned on his heel, having discharged

his duty, and the spy said triumphantly to Enoch:

"What did I tell you, lad? It seems you haven't been forgotten yet. Go on, and I'll wait here in order to see you before you leave us again, for I allow your work as aid isn't finished."

CHAPTER XVIII.

PREPARING FOR ACTION.

When Enoch presented himself at headquarters the sentry saluted and stood aside for him to pass into the tent, and perhaps for the first time since he had been attached to General Washington's staff, however informally, he felt a certain sense of pride at being thus received.

When Enoch entered he found General Washington and several of his officers discussing the probable intentions of the enemy.

"There can be no question, gentlemen, but that he intended to pass through New Brunswick, as was indicated by the fact that on the morning of the evacuation the parole was 'Jersey,' and the countersign 'Brunswick.' It is, in my opinion, evident that our movements have caused him to change his intended route, or it may be that the necessarily slow advance of such an immense train, where bridges and causeways must be built over streams and marshes, induces General Clinton to believe it would be dangerous to make further effort toward carrying out his intentions. I regret that you have decided against the hazard of a general engagement."

"If your excellency pleases, I would like to state why I am opposed to any interference at present with the enemy," an officer who was seated near Washington said courteously.

"I think, General Lee, you have already defined your position plainly," the commander-in-chief replied. "You believe the enemy is still too strong for us; that his troops are so far superior to ours that even though we outnumber him, we have no right to engage."

"I believe, sir, that continued annoyance of the enemy by detachments is our proper course, and my belief is shared by at least six general officers."

"Very true, sir. And in favor of a battle there are only Generals Greene, Wayne, Lafayette and myself. It is known that General Morgan has gained the rear of the British right flank, and Maxwell is willing to put in on their left. I propose, therefore, to add to that force fifteen hundred picked men under General Charles Scott, and one thousand under Wayne; the combined force to be in the command of General Lafayette."

It was as if Washington had not observed Enoch's entrance until this moment.

Turning to the boy, he said:

"You will ride with all speed to such point as it will be possible to communicate with Generals Maxwell and Dickinson. Show them this memoranda, and say I expect they will make most active interference with the enemy. You will have seen both these generals by morning, and are to return at once

to Kingston on the Millstone River, where we shall bivouac. Commit to memory the lines here written, and should you be in the least danger of capture, destroy this paper immediately. Were you detained by the enemy after leaving General Dickinson?"

"The general sent my two friends with me on a scout near Mount Holly, and we were made prisoners by a Tory whose name I understand is Plummer. We succeeded in escaping within twenty-four hours, but when I left General Dickinson I understood I was to go directly to Valley Forge, therefore was delayed."

General Lee questioned Enoch sharply as to his adventures in the house of the Tory, and the boy, remembering what had been told him regarding that officer, fancied he was better acquainted with Plummer than he would have it appear.

On leaving headquarters Enoch went directly to where he last saw Greene, and since nothing had been said relative to keeping his proposed movements a secret, told the spy what he had been ordered to do, mentioning also General Lee's evident interest in the Tory who would have made prisoners of the scouts.

"There is no question in my mind but that Lee is better acquainted and more in sympathy with people of Plummer's class than with those who are friends to the cause, and I predict General Washington will be convinced, before many days have passed, that the officer next in rank to him is not as good an American as he should be."

Enoch waited only long enough to inquire regarding the most direct roads, and then, with such rations in his pocket as Greene thought necessary, he began the journey.

Acting under the spy's advice he rode directly to Trenton, and from there, after making inquiries, continued on toward Allentown, overtaking General Dickinson's command at nightfall.

On this occasion he had no opportunity for an interview with either Jacob or Seth.

He saw the latter as he rode up; but there was no time to speak with him, since his first duty was to deliver the message, and when that had been done he learned it was necessary to continue on four miles further in order to find General Maxwell.

It was nightfall when he gained an interview with this last-named officer, and half an hour later was dismissed with orders to remain in camp until morning.

Had he followed his own inclinations he would have returned to spend the night with his comrades; but the instructions were positive, and he understood that personal desires were not to be considered under such circumstances.

During the short evening spent in this camp he learned that General Clinton had turned to the right on the road leading to Monmouth Court House,* and it was believed among the men that

* Now Freehold.

his intentions were to march to Sandy Hook, from which point he could embark his troops for New York.

"The Britishers will find themselves in a hornets' nest when they get into Monmouth County," one of the elder soldiers said to Enoch, after telling him of the evident change of route. "Devil David, as they call General Forman, is in that section of the country, and Sir Henry Clinton will learn that he well deserves his name."

"Do you think we shall have a battle there?"

"I hope it'll come somewhere near, although I can't say that section of the country is the best in the world for our purpose. If General Washington strikes a blow now, we shall give the Britishers a lesson, don't you fear. But he never will do it if Lee can persuade him to the contrary, for I hold that man to be a Britisher at heart, who does all he can to avoid inflicting punishment on the king's men."

Then the soldier told Enoch how the New Jersey troops had been employed during the past three days, harassing the enemy on their march, and when his recital was finished the young aid sought such rest as could be obtained on the bare ground under the shelter of the pine trees.

On the following morning General Maxwell gave Enoch a written message to be delivered to the commander-in-chief, as he said:

"You had better read it, lad, in order to be able to repeat the substance in case it is taken from you. You

will proceed at once to General Dickinson; show him what I have written, and ask if he has anything to add. Then go without delay to the main army. I understand they will be at Kingston to-morrow, therefore you will have ample time to reach them."

As Enoch rode slowly toward where he had last seen General Dickinson's forces he had good opportunity to read the message he was to carry, and thus learned that it was simply a detailed account of what had been done by the New Jersey troops since Clinton left Mount Holly.

The soldier with whom he talked on the previous night had told him the same thing in substance, and he had no question but that he should be able to repeat the more important portions of it in case the document was lost.

General Dickinson's force was on the march when he rode up, and his interview with that officer was brief.

"There is nothing I wish to add to General Maxwell's report, and you may turn back at once."

Enoch obeyed, riding directly past Jacob and Seth, but not daring to draw rein.

"Where are you bound for?" Jacob shouted, and he replied with a single word:

"Kingston."

"Is General Washington there?" some one in the ranks cried, and Enoch replied:

"He will be to-morrow."

Then a hearty cheer went up from the men, for they now knew the commander-in-chief was moving

nearer the enemy, and all understood this as indicating that a general engagement would follow.

There was little need for such a precaution as reading General Maxwell's message.

The young aid was not molested on his journey, and on the night of the 24th applied for lodgings at a dwelling in Kingston, believing it would be wiser to remain there until General Washington should come up, than push on with the chances of missing the command on the road.

It was at the house of an ardent patriot, who was serving in the Continental army, that Enoch slept, and after the sun rose next morning he had not long to wait before delivering the message.

"You will accompany us on the march, my boy," General Washington said as he glanced hurriedly over the report, and Enoch, thus dismissed, fell back to the rear until he found Greene.

"It begins to look as if we shouldn't miss a general engagement, lad," the spy said gleefully, "though I don't doubt Lee will do all he can to prevent it. Are you at liberty to tell me anything?"

"I know very little myself, except that the Britishers are said to be on the road to Sandy Hook."

"Then we shall come up with them for certain. Devil David won't allow Clinton to march through Monmouth County unmolested.

"But how can General Lee prevent an engagement, if the commander-in-chief desires one?" Enoch asked.

"In the first place he's second in command, and his opinion should have more weight than that of the others. Last night a thousand men under General Wayne were detailed to join the advance corps now in command of Lafayette, which gives him four thousand picked soldiers. It seems that Lee, who by right should have command of that division, being opposed to a general engagement, allowed the Marquis de Lafayette to take his place; and, as we all know, the Frenchman believes in tackling the enemy without delay. Now it seems, as I have heard, that Lee has changed his mind suddenly, and asks to be reinstated, which of course can't be done with justice to the marquis; but, to keep things moving smoothly, General Washington has given Lee command of two brigades, with orders to join Lafayette, and there, as you can imagine, his rank will entitle him to supreme command. I doubt not but that you will see the marquis soon."

"Why?"

"In my opinion the commander-in-chief must give Lafayette some reason for allowing Lee to join him, after all that has been said and done, and I reckon you are the aid who can best be spared just now. What have the New Jersey troops been doing?"

While Enoch was detailing to his friend that which he had learned from the soldier during the night he spent with General Maxwell's forces, an orderly rode back, inquiring for the boy who had

just come from the front, and when the young aid presented himself, announced that the commander-in-chief wished to see him.

"Is your horse fresh?" General Washington asked when Enoch rode up.

"Yes, sir."

"Then you will take this letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, who is, or will be by the time you arrive, at Cranberry. This is purely a personal matter, and you will present the letter without ostentation. Be discreet during the journey, for although I do not anticipate your meeting the enemy between here and that point, it is not impossible there may be scouting parties out."

There was apparently no reason why Enoch should return to where he had left his friend Greene, and he set off without delay, riding during the remainder of the day, and at nightfall was standing in front of General Lafayette's quarters—a dilapidated house on the easterly side of the small settlement of Cranberry.

Asking for an interview on the plea of important business, and taking good care not to mention the fact that he was a messenger from the commander-in-chief, Enoch was admitted at a time when the marquis was alone, and, therefore, had no difficulty in giving him the letter privately.

The marquis read it carefully, appeared alternately surprised and disappointed, and finally asked:

"Are you on General Washington's staff, my boy?"

"His excellency was so kind as to say that I should consider myself in that position; but it was only done, when I brought the news of the evacuation, in order that I might have no trouble in getting rations for myself and horse."

"It seems that you still occupy that position?"

"Yes, sir, and the reason, I suppose, is that my services are required; but I am not really an aid."

"You come very nearly being so, it would seem. What were you ordered to do after delivering this letter."

"There were no orders given, sir."

"Then you will remain here in case I should have occasion to communicate with his excellency. You will mess with my staff."

"Would you have any objections, sir, to my finding a place among the soldiers?"

"For what reason?"

"I shall feel more at home there, sir, for it is really where I belong; but the horse I have ridden should be——"

"He shall be cared for by my servants. Turn him over to them, and do as you choose, so far as your personal comforts are concerned."

As one who had just come from the main army Enoch was welcomed by the men, and had no difficulty in finding quarters for the night.

On the following morning the heat was most intense.

The scouts, who brought in the report that the British had halted at Monmouth Court House, com-

plained bitterly of the sufferings to be endured on the sandy roads under the sun's fervent rays, and but little was done by the advance division of the Continental army.

On this evening the clouds gathered, but the intense heat was not abated, and it seemed absolutely impossible the men could move from their posts.

Enoch remained in camp during the day and night, suffering severely from the sultriness of the air, and wondering whether it would be possible for men to fight under that glaring sun, even though the enemy should give them every opportunity.

On the morning of the 27th the welcome rain began to fall, but the camp was astir early, Enoch remaining near General Lafayette, expecting each moment to receive orders to return to the main army. Instead of that, however, the troops moved forward, he following as a matter of course, and no halt was made until they bivouacked at Englishtown, a small settlement about five miles west of Monmouth Court House.

At noon word was brought in that Clinton had changed the disposition of his line, placing the baggage train in front, under command of General Knyphausen, and the grenadiers, light infantry, and chasseurs of the line (his best troops) in the rear.

He was encamped in a strong position, secured on nearly every side by marshy grounds and heavy woods. His line extended on the right about half a mile beyond the courthouse to the parting of the

road leading to Shrewsbury and Middleton, and on the left along the road from Monmouth and Allenton, about three miles.

Hardly had this information been brought when General Lee with two brigades joined Lafayette, and the word was passed around the camp that the officer whom all believed to be a traitor to the cause had assumed command of the entire division, now amounting to about five thousand men.

Almost immediately after this arrival Enoch received his long-expected orders.

He was summoned by Lafayette and charged to ride back on the road at full speed to acquaint General Washington with the facts of the situation, which were plainly detailed to him by the marquis himself.

The journey was destined to be a short one, for when he had ridden three miles Enoch found the main army encamping, and made his report to the commander-in-chief while that officer sat upon his horse, observing with interest the movements of his men.

"You will report to me at sunset," the general said curtly when Enoch ceased speaking, and the latter rode away to find Greene.

"We're close up to them, lad," the spy cried joyfully as the young aid dismounted and began to care for his horse. "We're close up to them, and it won't be many hours before we shall have a fair chance to show what Continental soldiers can do when the odds are somewhere near even. This rain

is a Godsend, for if it hadn't come I doubt whether it would be possible for men to march in such heat."

"But could a battle be fought while it is so hot?"

"You'll find, lad, that nothing short of a heavy rain will stop anything of that kind. When men set out to kill each other, the weather makes little difference, unless it is such as spoils the powder. Where are the Britishers by this time?"

"At Monmouth Court House, so the report is, and prepared for battle."

"I allow, then, they're in about the same condition we are, and the general officers who argued against engagements must now hold their tongues or set themselves down as cowards. The only thing that's giving me worry is the fact that Lee is in advance."

"And has assumed command of the division," Enoch added.

"That was to be expected, and if he has his way the Britishers will keep on to the coast unmolested; but I'll allow he won't dare be very bold in trying to hold us back. What orders have you for the rest of the day?"

"I am to report at headquarters at sunset."

"Good, lad, good!" Greene exclaimed, clapping him vigorously on the shoulder. "Do you know what that means?"

"I suppose it is because I am needed."

"Yes, lad, you're right; but you're to be needed because the commander-in-chief believes the time for the battle is near at hand. When you are ordered off again, it'll be to carry word for some

division to make a decided advance. That I predict, and you'll find I'm not far out of the way. Leave me to take care of your horse, and I'll see he's ready for service whenever you need him."

"If you are right, then I'm not to go into battle as a soldier."

"But you're to be there just the same, lad, and what's more, have a better chance of seeing and knowing all that's going on than the rest of us. Don't fret because you won't have a musket in your hands. The man in the ranks knows precious little of what's being done, except directly in front of him. I'd give a full year of my life if I could be in your place during the next forty-eight hours."

"I wish you might be there, and I could join Seth and Enoch."

"Never you mind them; they'll give a good account of themselves, I'll warrant. Now that Master Ludwick has got over his disappointment at not receiving a commission when he wasn't fit even to be a private, he'll fight as gallantly as an older man. The rest of us must lay still till the time for action comes; but you have the advantage of knowing all that's being done, and if you can pass me a word at any time, lad, when some decisive movement is to be made, I wish you would."

It seemed as if Greene never could tire of discussing the situation, and the probable outcome of a general engagement.

While Enoch would have been pleased to converse on some other subject, the spy continued his pre-

dictions for the future until the day was spent, and the setting sun warned the young aid that it was time to report for duty.

"I must go now," he said, interrupting Greene in his explanation of how the engagement would begin and how end.

"So you must, lad, and I've been babbling here like an old man, on a matter regarding which I knew very little, when it comes to facts. Take care of yourself—I'm not afraid but that you'll be brave enough; the only danger is you'll be foolhardy—and remember to keep me posted if it so be you can without betraying confidence."

Then Enoch, assuring himself his horse was well cared for, went toward General Washington's quarters.

CHAPTER XIX.

A FRIENDLY WARNING.

Arriving at headquarters, Enoch attracted but little attention.

The staff officers were discussing the information which had been brought in from different sources, and speculating upon the probable events of the coming day; but no one gave any heed to the young aid.

Thus it was that the boy learned, without the necessity of asking questions, the different opinions of the Continental officers regarding the advisability of attacking General Clinton and his well-organized, well-disciplined, and thoroughly-seasoned troops.

Now and then Washington joined in the conversation; but as a rule he remained apart from the others, as if in deep study, oftentimes neglecting to answer a question, and Enoch noticed that his apparent preoccupation occurred more often when his opinion was asked concerning some point upon which his officers were divided in opinion.

Twice during the evening the commander-in-chief dispatched an aid to some division, but gave no heed whatever to Enoch, and the boy began to fancy that the general had forgotten the order relative to reporting at sunset.

It was nearly nine o'clock in the evening when the commander-in-chief, turning to the officer nearest him, said:

"Major, will you oblige me by riding to General Lee's quarters, and saying to him it is my desire he shall have his troops ready to move at a moment's notice?"

The officer bowed and left the tent, and then it was as if the commander but had just seen Enoch.

"You were ordered to report at sunset, my lad."

"So I did, sir, and have been here ever since."

"It may be necessary to keep you on duty all night. Roll yourself in one of those blankets, and lie down."

Enoch had no desire to sleep; but this was neither more nor less than a command, and he obeyed.

Lying on the ground at the edge of the tent, behind the camp-table, he would easily escape observation. But the novelty of his surroundings, the fact that officers were entering and leaving the tent almost constantly, and the belief that a battle was imminent—would, perhaps, be fought on the morrow—drove from his eyelids the desire for slumber, and he was an interested observer of all that occurred around him.

Couriers were coming in from the different divisions, bearing messages which required immediate answers, and Washington was sending out aids in every direction to gather information concerning his own troops and the movements of the enemy.

Not until nearly midnight was the tent free from visitors, and then the commander-in-chief began to write, using certain memoranda Enoch had observed him making during the day, in the preparation of what were evidently official documents.

It was while General Washington was thus employed, apparently to the exclusion of everything else, and the silence which ensued was profound as compared with the confusion of an hour previous, that sleep was beginning to weigh upon the young aid's eyelids, when he heard a gruff "Who goes there?" from the sentinel on duty, and then the reply:

"I am Dr. Griffith, chaplain and surgeon of the Virginia line, on business highly important to the commander-in-chief."

There was a brief delay, after which Enoch heard a call for the officer of the guard.

When that soldier arrived the boy heard the visitor repeat his words, receiving as answer:

"It is impossible, sir, absolutely impossible. My orders are positive; the general cannot be seen on any account."

"Present, sir, my humble duty to his excellency, and tell him that Dr. Griffith waits on him with secret and important intelligence, and craves an audience of only five minutes' duration."

This conversation could be plainly distinguished by those within the tent, but so engrossed was the commander with his writing that he apparently heard no word of it. He looked up in surprise, not

unmingled with disapprobation, when the officer of the guard entered.

The visitor's message was repeated, and the commander-in-chief said almost impatiently:

"Admit him, major; admit him."

Enoch believed that he ought not to remain if the business to be transacted was "secret;" but General Washington's orders had been for him to lie in that place, and he did not dare suggest that he should retire.

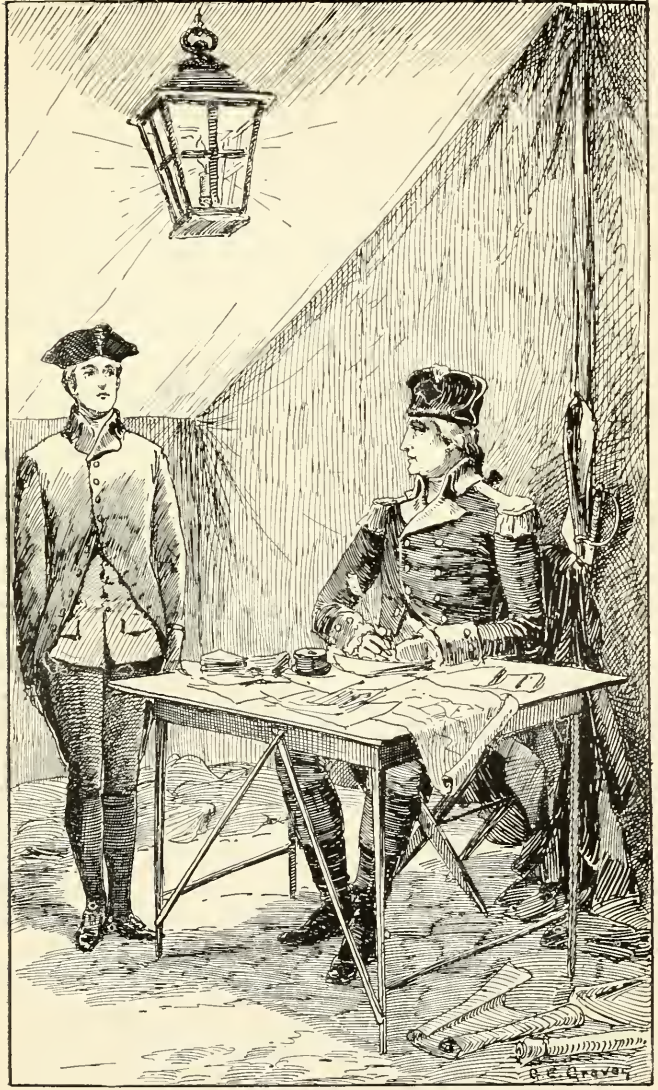
The visitor entered hurriedly, and with no slight confusion.

He was dressed in civilian's garb, but gave a soldierly salute, and introduced himself by repeating that which he had told the sentinel:

"I am, your excellency, Dr. Griffith, chaplain and surgeon of the Virginia line, and apologize for my intrusion, which would be unwarranted but for information which has come to me in strictest confidence. My informants are men of the highest character as citizens and patriots, and they have stated positively that, of their own knowledge, General Lee has made such arrangements with Clinton that he will avoid any serious engagement tomorrow, if it be possible. I am convinced of the correctness of this statement, your excellency, and beg you will give it your closest attention."

Then saluting, and without waiting for a reply, Dr. Griffith left the tent.

General Washington remained motionless as if in deep thought, until Enoch began to fancy he had



"YOU HAVE SHOWN YOURSELF TO BE A LAD OF KEEN PERCEPTION," SAID GENERAL WASHINGTON.

Washington at Monmouth, p. 291.

fallen asleep, and was startled when the commander said sharply :

"Are you awake, my boy ?"

"I am, sir," and Enoch rose to his feet.

"You have shown yourself to be a lad of keen perception, quick to understand what others might fail to believe of importance. The communication which you heard made was of a confidential nature. It is never to be repeated!"

Enoch bowed; but did not reply.

"You are to ride at once to General Lee's quarters, and tell him that it is my desire he shall have a small body of troops stationed very near the British line to observe their movements, and give immediate notice if there is any indication on their part of resuming the march. Should this last occur they are to skirmish with the enemy in order that our army may move into position, and General Lee will report to me instantly he learns of any movement. You will also tell him that you are directed by me to give the same order to Generals Maxwell and Dickinson. Let me know if you thoroughly understand my meaning."

Enoch repeated almost verbatim the words of the commander.

"That is correct. Carry out the instructions with all possible haste, and report to me how the orders have been received. In other words, you will observe carefully the apparent effect which the command has upon the several gentlemen. Call the officer of the guard."

Enoch obeyed by going just outside the tent and speaking to the sentinel.

Then he returned, and a moment later the officer entered.

"Major," General Washington said, "this boy will be passed into my tent to-night at whatever hour he may appear."

The officer saluted and withdrew.

"Now go, my boy, and do not spare your horse."

In half an hour from the time he left headquarters, Enoch was halted by the sentinel in front of General Lee's tent.

"A messenger from the commander-in-chief," he announced, "with orders to speak with General Lee at once."

Five minutes later he was repeating General Washington's words to the officer who was suspected by many of not only being lukewarm toward the cause, but absolutely an enemy to it, and he fancied the command he brought was received with anything rather than satisfaction.

Twice during that brief time did Lee interrupt him to inquire if he was repeating the commander-in-chief's exact words, and when he said that his orders were to deliver the same message to Generals Maxwell and Dickinson, the general asked sharply:

"Does his excellency think I have no aids in camp?"

"I don't know as to that, sir. I am only explaining to you my orders, as I was told to do."

"You may say to General Washington that his

commands will be obeyed at once," Lee replied after a short pause, and intimated that the interview was at an end by turning his back upon Enoch.

It was necessary the boy should linger in camp several moments in order to learn the exact whereabouts of the other detachments; but once this had been done, he set off at full speed, and twenty minutes later reined in his horse as a familiar voice cried:

"Halt! Who goes there?"

"A messenger from the commander-in-chief to General Dickinson. Why, is that you, Seth?"

"I ought to be pretty certain of the fact after tramping up and down here for the last two hours," Master Graydon replied grimly as Enoch leaped from his horse. "I shall be off duty in ten minutes, though, which is more than you can say, I reckon, even if you *are* an aid to the commander-in-chief."

"Now, Seth, don't keep ringing the changes on that. You know I want to be with you and Jacob; but there doesn't seem much chance of accomplishing my purpose before the battle."

"Then you believe we are really to have one?"

"I think it is bound to come to-morrow."

"But to-morrow is Sunday," Seth exclaimed, as if doubting whether armies would meet in conflict on the Sabbath.

"I don't believe they keep run of the days of the week in a time of war. Where are General Maxwell's quarters?"

"He hasn't had any to speak of for quite a spell.

If you want to see him, though, he was lying under the same tree with General Dickinson when I saw him last."

"Will you call the officer of the guard?"

"What for?"

"I want to speak with the generals."

"Well, why don't you go ahead and do it? I know you are on General Washington's staff, and so it will be all right."

"It might for me, but not for you, Seth. I don't think a private soldier is allowed to decide even in such a case as this. To save yourself trouble you had better call the officer of the guard."

Master Graydon thought this a needless formality; but he followed his friend's advice, and during the short time which elapsed before that official made his appearance, Enoch asked:

"Where can I see you and Seth a few minutes before I leave?"

"Are you going right away again?"

"Just as soon as I deliver my message, and that may take ten or fifteen minutes."

"If I am relieved before then, Jacob and I will find you. Say, do you know General Dickinson sent a squad down to the house where we were made prisoners, and I reckon they didn't use the Tory very softly. He's here in camp under guard, and I heard he was likely to get it pretty rough after what he did to us."

"Then the blow from the pistol didn't do him any serious damage?"

"I reckon he knew he got it, for his head is tied up, and he tried to make the soldiers think he was so near dead he couldn't be moved."

The arrival of the officer of the guard put an end to the conversation, and after stating the purpose of his visit, Enoch was escorted to where the two generals lay on the ground as Seth had described.

By them his message was received far differently than it had been by Lee.

"You may assure his excellency that we will be on the alert," Maxwell replied promptly, and Dickinson said, in a tone of approbation:

"This begins to look like business. We can now have some idea of General Washington's intentions."

Then both arose to their feet to carry out the order given, and Enoch was left to his own devices.

Not only Jacob and Seth, but Greene the spy, met the young aid just as he had mounted his horse preparatory to returning, and Enoch was plied with questions as to the whereabouts and disposition of the main army.

General Dickinson, who was standing near by, gave orders for a certain number of men to move nearer the British lines, and Greene said in a matter-of-fact tone as he heard it:

"I reckon that's owing to the word you brought, lad. It means business, and no mistake. Lee will have to show his cloven foot if he succeeds in preventing an engagement during the next twenty-four hours."

"It doesn't seem possible he could, or would dare to try anything of the kind," Enoch replied in a whisper.

"He will dare, I have no question; but whether he can or not, while every officer and man in the army is eager to try conclusions with the Britishers, is another matter. I allow we shall have hot work to-morrow, boys, and if it so be, Enoch, that you pass anywhere near us, pull up to give the latest news, for you are likely to see a good bit of the engagement. Now, move on, my boy, for you have no right to loiter here when your orders were to return at once."

Seth and Jacob reached up to clasp their comrade's hands, for all knew they might never meet again in this world, but Greene cried sharply:

"None of that, lads; no bidding good-by to each other because we're on the eve of a battle. Say 'Godspeed,' and let Enoch go."

Thus was avoided that which might have unnerved all three for the time being, and Master Ball rode away through the darkness, feeling that he was of service to the cause even though he might not stand before the enemy with a musket in his hand.

It was nearly three o'clock when Enoch again entered the headquarters tent, and found General Washington still busily engaged with his writing.

Without waiting for questions he reported how, to the best of his observation, the order was received by the generals, but the commander-in-chief made no comment.

"Lie down again, boy, and sleep if you can. Wait! Has your horse been cared for?"

"No, sir, I left him just outside the tent."

"Then see that he is fed. You may not have another opportunity for some hours."

Enoch spent no little time in grooming the animal that had carried him so swiftly and steadily, and was still engaged in the work when a soldier came up hurriedly:

"The general wants to see you at once."

Hastening back to headquarters Enoch found the tent filled with officers, and from their conversation understood that General Dickinson had sent a courier to report to the commander-in-chief that the enemy had commenced their march.

The boy waited several moments before Washington ceased giving commands to those around him, and then turning to Enoch he said abruptly:

"Ride with all speed to General Lee, and order him to move forward and attack the enemy unless powerful reasons should prevail. Tell him the entire army have thrown their packs aside, and are advancing to his support. Ride, lad, ride hard, and return to me when your work has been accomplished."

Enoch obeyed, and once more was dashing across the country, this time in such excitement as to be hardly aware of what he did, for he understood that the battle was about to begin.

He found General Lee asleep, and the officer of the guard at first refused to awaken him; but Enoch

understood how important it was the order should be delivered without loss of time, and insisted as peremptorily as an experienced soldier might have done, upon being allowed to repeat his message at once.

The order was received quietly—Enoch fancied with disapprobation—and the only reply given was:

"Say to the commander-in-chief that his instructions shall be followed to the letter."

Then without delay the boy rode back at full speed, passing on his way several brigades which were being hurried forward, and finding General Washington where he had left him, still in consultation with his officers.

During several hours was the young aid forced to remain inactive, and regarding this time, and the movements which were being made, the details can best be described by quoting from an article in *Harper's Magazine*, 1878:

"June 28th was the Sabbath. . . . The day was the hottest of the year. At dawn General Knyphausen began to march with the first division of the British army, which included the German troops, the 'Hessians,' and the Pennsylvania and Maryland Loyalists. Clinton with the other division —the flower of the army—did not move until eight o'clock, for General Lee was so tardy in obeying the order of Washington that the enemy had ample time to prepare for battle.

"When Dickinson gave notice of Knyphausen's

movement the main body of the Americans began to move immediately. Colonel Grayson, with his own regiment leading the brigades of Scott and Varnum, had passed the Freehold meeting-house, nearly three miles from Monmouth Court House, before he received orders from Lee to push forward and attack the enemy. The aid who brought the order advised Grayson to halt, for he had heard on the way that the main body of the British army were moving to attack the Americans. General Dickinson had received the same information, which he communicated to Lee, when the latter pushed forward with his staff across a narrow causeway near the parsonage, and joined Dickinson upon the height close by. While he was endeavoring to unravel the conflicting intelligence, Lafayette arrived at the head of the advanced troops.

"Lee's whole command, exclusive of Morgan's sharpshooters and the New Jersey militia, now numbered about four thousand men. The broken country was heavily wooded up to the elevated plain of Monmouth. Lee, satisfied that no important force of the enemy was on either flank, pressed forward under cover of the forest, and formed a portion of his line for action near some open fields. Then, with Wayne and others, he reconnoitered the enemy. They saw what they supposed to be a covering party of the British about two thousand strong. Wayne was detached with seven hundred men and two field-pieces to attack their rear. Meanwhile Lee, with a stronger force, endeavored,

by a short road leading to the left, to gain the front of the party, while small detachments, concealed in the woods, annoyed their flanks.

"It was now nine o'clock in the morning. Just as Wayne was preparing to make the attack, a party of American light-horsemen, advancing, were directed to make a feigned assault upon some British dragoons seen upon an eminence, and, by retreating, draw them into a position to be received by Wayne. The maneuver was partially successful. The dragoons followed until fired upon by a party under Colonel Butler, ambushed on the edge of a wood, when they wheeled and fled toward the main army. Wayne ordered Colonel Oswald, who was in command of his field-pieces, to cross a morass, plant them on an eminence, and open fire on the retreating dragoons, while he should press forward and attack them with the bayonet. Wayne was prosecuting the maneuver with vigor at a point about three-fourths of a mile eastward of the courthouse, with a prospect of full success, when he received an order from Lee to make only a feigned attack, and not to press on too precipitately, as it might frustrate his plan for cutting off the covering party. Wayne was exasperated; but he obeyed, only to be disappointed, for Lee really did nothing.

"At that moment Clinton was informed that the Americans were marching on both his flanks to capture his baggage-train. To avert the danger he changed the front of his army, and prepared to attack Wayne with so much vigor that the armies

on the British flanks would be compelled to fly to the succor of that officer. A large body of royal troops approached Lee's right, when Lafayette, perceiving that a good opportunity was offered to gain the rear of the enemy, rode quickly up to Lee, and asked his permission to attempt the maneuver. Lee replied:

"'Sir, you do not know British soldiers; we cannot stand against them. We shall certainly be driven back at first, and we must be cautious.'

"The marquis replied:

"'That may be, general; but British soldiers have been beaten, and they may be beaten again; I am disposed to make the trial."

"Lee so far yielded as to order Lafayette to wheel his column and attack the enemy's left. At the same time he weakened Wayne's detachment on the left by ordering the regiments of Wesson, Stewart, and Livingston to support the right. Then he rode to Oswald's battery to reconnoiter, when he saw a large portion of the British army marching back on the Middletown road toward the courthouse. Apparently disconcerted, he ordered his right to fall back. The brigades of Scott and Maxwell on the left were already moving forward toward the right of the royal forces, who were pushing steadily on in solid phalanx toward the position occupied by Lee, with the apparent design of gaining Wayne's rear and attacking the American right at the same time.

"General Scott now left the wood, crossed the

morass, and was forming for action on the plain, and Maxwell was preparing to do the same, when Lee ordered the former to re-enter the wood and await further orders. When Scott perceived the retrograde movement on the right, mistaking the spirit of Lee's orders, he recrossed the morass and retreated toward Freehold meeting-house, followed by Maxwell. When Lee was informed of this movement he ordered Lafayette to fall back to Monmouth Court House. The marquis did so with reluctance, and was mortified to find that a general retreat had begun on the right under the immediate command of Lee, and he was obliged to follow. The British pursued as far as the courthouse, and halted, while the Americans pressed on across the morass near the house of Mr. Carr, to the heights of Freehold, and halted. The heat was intense, and in many places the soldiers sank ankle-deep in the burning sand. The royal troops soon followed, and Lee, instead of making a bold stand in his advantageous position on the eminence, renewed his retreat toward Freehold meeting-house. This produced a panic among the American troops, and they fled in great confusion in the wooded and broken country, many of them perishing as they pressed over the narrow causeway to cross the broad morass. Others, struck down by the heat, were trampled to death in the sand. At first both parties kept up a rambling cannonade; soon nothing was heard but a few musket-shots and the loud shouts of the pursuers.

"Lafayette, who knew Lee's ambition to supersede Washington in command of his army, had watched his movements all the morning with anxiety, for he was satisfied that Lee was either cowardly or treacherous."

During all this time Enoch had remained inactive, standing with the bridle of his horse in his hand, ready to ride off at a moment's warning, and with the sounds of the conflict ringing in his ears. It seemed to him cruel that he should be deprived of the opportunity of striking a blow for the cause at a time when he knew men were needed; but General Washington, calm and collected, had given no heed to the excited boy who remained almost at his elbow.

"Suddenly the commander-in-chief turned, and said sharply:

"Ride forward, lad, and ask General Lafayette if he can send me any information."

Gladly Enoch obeyed this command, and regardless of possible danger urged his horse steadily ahead, stopping from time to time to ask of the different troops where the marquis could be found.

It seemed to him as if he had been an hour performing the journey, although in reality it was hardly more than ten minutes, when he drew rein in front of Lafayette, and, saluting, said:

"General Washington wishes information as to the movements of the enemy."

The marquis, looking anxious and troubled, glanced around him for an instant as if trying to

decide what words had best be used, and said hurriedly:

"Tell General Washington that his presence here is of the utmost importance, for in my opinion it is absolutely necessary he himself direct the movements. Ride hard, boy; there is not a moment to be lost."

CHAPTER XX.

THE VICTORS.

Enoch obeyed General Lafayette's order at the best speed of his horse, and, arriving at that point where the commander-in-chief was directing the movements of his men, the young aid, breathless and excited, repeated that which the marquis had said.

The words were hardly spoken, and Washington had had no opportunity for comment, when a horseman, riding hard, his steed covered with foam, spurred up to the group of officers, and saluting the commander, said hurriedly:

"I am sent by General Lee to say that all is well with the advance corps; success is certain."

Then, saluting, this second messenger rode away, leaving Washington and his staff gazing at each other in something very nearly approaching bewilderment.

Either Lee or Lafayette was mistaken in his estimate of the condition of affairs.

The opinion of one of these gentlemen must be correct, and the fate of the battle depended upon the decision which the commander-in-chief should

arrive at concerning the reliability of the two officers.

It seemed to Enoch as if this second message deliberately gave him the lie. He felt positive General Lafayette had only the good of the American cause at heart, and because of that told him by Greene, in addition to what he had heard Dr. Griffith say, he believed Lee simply awaited an opportunity to show himself a traitor.

Washington remained silent while one might have counted twenty, and then turning to the aid nearest, said calmly:

"Tell General Greene* to press forward to the church, and prevent the turning of that flank of the army."

As the aid rode hurriedly away the commander directed that the left wing of the army march toward Lee's rear, in order to support the latter, and Enoch noted that as soon as the different divisions received such instructions, the men, understanding quite as well as their leaders what it meant, went forward in the best of spirits, regardless of the terrific heat which thus far had been nearly as fatal as the bullets.

Before these last orders could be fully carried out, a horseman in civilian's dress was seen making his way among the troops from the direction of the front, and did not slacken pace until he was within

* General Greene was commanding the right wing of the army at the time.

a dozen yards of General Washington. Then he cried excitedly:

"The advance corps is retreating in a most cowardly manner!"

"What did you say, sir?" Washington demanded, spurring his horse forward.

"I said, your excellency, that the advance corps of the army is retreating in most shameful disorder, and without cause. The formation is lost, and it is simply a rabble that is bearing down on the main army, frightened almost beyond control by their own officers rather than because of any advantage gained by the enemy!"

"Who are you, sir?"

"Dr. Thomas Henderson, of this village."

General Washington struck the spurs deep into his horse as he dashed forward, his staff following closely behind, and with them, as a matter of course, was Enoch.

The boy, who had believed when he spoke with Lafayette that the Continentals were at least holding their own, was now plunged into the deepest grief, for he fancied that the retreat once begun, meant defeat for the entire army.

The young aid was within a dozen yards of the commander-in-chief, when, on arriving at a point about halfway between the meeting-house and the morass, the head of the first retreating column was met.

"Halt your men on that eminence!" General Washington cried to the commanding officer, not

slackening his pace. "Halt, I say, sir, and get them into order!"

Across the causeway to the rear of the flying column the commander dashed, and there, at the head of the second division of retreating forces, was seen General Lee.

By this time Enoch was forty or fifty yards in the rear of the staff; but he heard Washington cry in a loud, angry voice to the man who was responsible for this disgraceful flight:

"Sir, I desire to know what is the reason, and whence came this disorder and confusion?"

Enoch could not distinguish General Lee's reply; he saw from the face of the man, and understood by his gestures, that he retorted harshly, and it was evident to the boy that the commander-in-chief and the officer next him in rank indulged in angry words, after which Washington wheeled his horse into the midst of the retreating troops until he had rallied a portion of them.

Enoch pressed forward as if aware of the fact that his services were soon to be needed, and, observing him, Washington cried:

"Ride with all speed to Colonel Oswald, and order him to plant his cannon on the brow of that hill. Tell him to use his pieces with energy upon the enemy."

In an incredibly short space of time the battery was pouring forth its iron hail, and the pursuing foe was checked.

An eye-witness of the battle writes regarding the

"SIR, I DESIRE TO KNOW WHAT IS THE REASON, AND WHENCE CAME THIS DISORDER AND CONFUSION?" SAID WASHINGTON IN A LOUD VOICE.

Washington at Monmouth, p. 308.

incidents immediately following the arrival of General Washington at the scene of the disorder:

"The presence of the commander-in-chief inspired the troops with such confidence and courage that within ten minutes after he appeared the retreat was suspended, and order brought out of confusion. Stewart and Ramsey formed their regiments under cover of the wood, and with Oswald, kept the enemy at bay.

"Washington rode fearlessly in the storm of missiles hurled by the British Grenadiers and artillerists; and when his army was arranged in battle order before the foe, he rode back to Lee, and, pointing to the rallied troops, said:

"'Will you, sir, command in that place?'

"'I will,' eagerly exclaimed Lee, for his treachery had utterly failed.

"'Then,' said Washington, 'I expect you to check the enemy immediately.'

"'Your command shall be obeyed,' said Lee, 'and I will not be the first to leave the field.'

"He fulfilled his promise.

"With wondrous expedition Washington now put the confused ranks of his main army in battle order. Lord Stirling commanded the left wing, posted on an eminence on the western side of the morass, while General Greene took an advantageous position on the left of Stirling. A warm cannonade had commenced between the American and British artillery on the right of Stewart and Ramsey, while the Royal Light-horse charged furiously upon the

right of Lee's division. The enemy pressed so closely with an overwhelming force that the Americans were compelled to give way at that point. Then the British attacked Ramsey's regiment and Varnum's brigade, which lined the hedgerow over the morass, and there the battle raged furiously for awhile, American cannon placed in the rear of the fence doing great execution."

Enoch sat on his horse directly behind General Washington as the furious charge of the British cavalry and infantry was made, and when the Continental troops were forced to retreat across the morass, he believed once more that defeat was certain.

His courage revived, however, as he saw the men forming in line later, and noted with satisfaction that Washington's face was calm and serene when General Lee rode up to him, saying in a respectful tone:

"Sir, here are my troops. How is it your pleasure that I shall dispose of them?"

"They have borne the brunt of battle and defeat all the morning, sir, and are now entitled to a rest. Form them in order directly in the rear of Englishtown, and there await further commands."

It seemed to Enoch as if these instructions had but just been given when the battle began to rage more furiously than ever, and now it appeared as if the troops in every direction were engaged.

"The left wing of the American army was commanded by Lord Stirling, the right by General Greene, and the center by Washington. Wayne,

with the advance corps, took possession of the eminence in the orchard, a few rods south of the parsonage. A park of artillery was placed in battery on Comb's Hill, beyond the marsh on his right, and commanding the height on which the British were stationed. Finding themselves opposed in front, the enemy attempted to turn the American left flank, but were repulsed. They also moved toward the American right, where they were enfiladed by a severe cannonade from the battery commanded by General Knox and planted on high ground, where General Greene was posted. Thus assailed, the enemy fell back."

During this time Enoch had been sent from one portion of the field to the other with orders, being constantly under a heavy fire, and was so deeply occupied in finding this commander or that as not to thoroughly comprehend what was going on around him.

It was as if he rode over a vast tract of country, dotted here by redcoats, and there by patriots in buff and blue, or in homespun garments, each man seemingly bent only on loading and discharging his weapon, and all the while acting in what, to a novice, was an aimless manner.

During two hours he hardly remained idle five minutes at a time, and the screaming of the leaden and iron missiles, which at the beginning of the engagement had sounded so ominously in his ears, was now almost unheeded.

During the morning the one thought ever in his

mind was the possibility of treachery by General Lee; but now that officer was in the rear, having in a measure redeemed himself, Enoch felt confident, so unbounded was his belief in the commander-in-chief, that the time must come, and soon, when the tide of battle would turn in their favor.

It was terrible in the extreme to ride amid the wounded men, who implored him to give them aid, when his duty demanded that he keep on regardless of their agony. It was as if he suffered from some horrible nightmare, when his horse leaped over dead bodies who lay with upturned faces and open eyes that stared at the pitiless sun which was sending down shafts of fire upon the combatants, the dying, and the dead.

It was while the Royal Grenadiers were pressing General Wayne behind the hedgerow most hotly that Enoch was sent to that officer to ask if he needed assistance, and found him partially sheltered by a barn near the parsonage, where he was urging his men, every one of whom had proved himself a hero, to yet greater exertions.

More than once had the Grenadiers crossed the hedgerow, hoping to dislodge the force that was playing such havoc among their ranks, and the general, watching closely the movements of the British, did not so much as turn his head when Enoch made known his message.

"Tell General Washington that I shall hold my position here. Unless he has men who are not needed elsewhere, there is no necessity for him to pay any

attention to what is going on at this point. I fancy we're a match for the Grenadiers!"

The young aid was so hemmed in by officers and men that for some moments he could not retrace his steps, and as if fascinated he watched that terrific struggle, which just at this time was more fierce than ever before.

While he was gazing at the apparently resistless tide of red-coated men who were pressing forward, he heard General Wayne say in a low, quick tone:

"Reserve your fire, men, until you can pick out their officers! Make every bullet count!"

These words caused Enoch to observe more particularly than he had previously done the leaders of the brave force who were advancing in the face of almost certain death, and to his surprise he recognized that officer who had subjected his comrades and himself to such searching inquiry when they were suspected of having aided Seth in escaping from prison.

It was Colonel Monckton, and at the moment when Enoch understood this fact the officer waved his sword above his head, shouting:

"To the charge, my brave troops! To the charge!"

On came the line of red.

Nearer and nearer, and neither shout nor report of musket from the Continentals.

It seemed to Enoch as if the enemy was hardly thirty yards away when he heard General Wayne cry sharply:

"Aim well and fire, boys!"

A deafening report followed this command, and as the smoke cleared away the Grenadiers could be seen falling back, almost entirely without an officer.

At that point nearest the American line the young aid saw, lying upon his face, the body of Colonel Monckton motionless in death, and heard as if in a dream the command from some officer near him for the men to rush forward and secure the corpse.

As if the British soldiers also heard this order, they halted, turned suddenly, and come back with a rush, making no effort to preserve their formation, but intent only on rescuing the body of their commander.

Sick at heart, for this killing of a man with whom he had been in some measure connected, however disagreeably, seemed worse than the fall of a stranger, Enoch turned his horse to ride back to the commander-in-chief; but before he was out of the press he heard loud cheers which told that the Americans had gained the ghastly prize, and, glancing over his shoulder, he saw the Grenadiers once more retreating.

Twice during the half hour that followed did Enoch see Lord Cosmo Gordon acting his part most heroically, and each time did the boy put up a fervent prayer that the gallant Englishman might escape unharmed.

"Fiercely the contest continued to rage at the

center of the British line, and at other points, until Wayne repulsed the Grenadiers. Then the entire line gave way, and fell back to the heights occupied by General Lee in the morning. It was a strong position, flanked by thick woods and morasses, with only a narrow way of approach in front."

This portion of the battle was won; but the Continentals were unable to pursue their advantage.

Night had now come, and in the darkness it was well-nigh impossible the American troops could continue the work so bravely pursued after the disgraceful rout, for which they were not really responsible.

The excessive heat of the day had wearied them equally with the fatigue of battle, and the commander-in-chief, to whose personal exertions the victory was due, said to Enoch:

"Ride to the right and give the word to all the commanders you find, that their troops may be allowed to sleep on their arms. It is the last duty I shall charge you with this day, lad, and you are at liberty to find repose wherever is most pleasing."

The young aid set out, picking his way here and there among the dead and the dying, repeating the welcome command to the leaders of the different divisions, and when he had reached that body of troops furthest to the right, he found himself among the gallant Jerseymen.

"It is time that order came," General Dickinson said with an air of relief. "But, lad, if we had had one more hour of daylight, the enemy would have

now been fleeing before us like a flock of frightened sheep."

"Is yours the last division on this side?"

"It is."

"I have permission to bivouac wherever I choose. May I remain with your troops, sir?"

"There is no need to ask that, lad, and I understand why you wish to do so. Your friends, raw recruits though they are, have this day done men's duty, and I congratulate you three Philadelphia boys upon your initiatory work as soldiers."

It was not an easy task to find his friends upon that blood-stained field; but Enoch succeeded after half an hour's search, and was received with shouts of joy by Jacob and Seth as he rode up.

"I began to fear something had happened to you," the latter cried, as Enoch dismounted and clasped him by the hands. "The last either of us saw of our friend, the aid, was when the Royal Grenadiers charged on General Wayne's forces."

"I was where I could see it all," Enoch replied, "and although we have no reason to think of Colonel Monckton kindly, it made me sad to see so gallant an officer fall."

"Did our men get possession of his body?" Jacob asked.

"Yes, and carried it to the rear. Have either of you fellows been wounded?"

"We haven't received so much as a scratch," Seth replied promptly, "and that seems strangest of all this day's work to me. When we were first under

fire I expected each moment to be killed; but as the time wore on I actually forgot the danger. Say, Enoch, you must have had it hotter than we did, if you kept with General Washington, and I saw you ride across the field half a dozen times when it seemed as if the bullets were flying around you as thickly as hail."

"My experience was about the same as yours in that respect. The first time I was sent with a message I felt terribly frightened; but after that thought only of the chances for success or failure. Where's Greene?"

"Somewhere hereabouts. He got a bullet through the arm; but declares that the wound is not serious, and refuses to go under the surgeon's care."

"I suppose now you have had so much experience, you will continue to be an aid," Jacob said, and there was no shade of envy in his tone this time. He realized as never before that if any one really desires to serve his country it makes little difference what position he occupies.

"Indeed I shan't," Enoch said emphatically. "When the time comes that I can speak with General Washington, I shall ask permission to enlist in the same company with you, and have no doubt but that it will be granted. Now, boys, I have come to mess with you. The order I brought General Dickinson was that the troops were to sleep on their arms, and I suppose we are at liberty to remain anywhere within these lines."

"There doesn't seem to be much choice. Sup-

pose we stay where we are," Seth suggested. "Greene left us here, and most likely will come back, when——"

"He is back now, lad," a voice cried, and a moment later the spy appeared from out the darkness. "I have got rations such as are being dealt out—Hello, here's our friend, the aid, and now he'll want grain for his horse. I'll look for some."

"Let me do that," Enoch cried as Greene, dropping on the ground the food he was carrying, was on the point of turning away again. "I am told that you are wounded, and you should have attention before playing waiter for us three who are in good bodily condition."

"The wound wasn't much more than a scratch, and the surgeon has already tied it up. You may look for provender for the horse if you have a mind to. The best place would be nearabout where General Dickinson is."

Enoch's horse did not receive a particularly hearty meal on this evening, owing to the lack of grain; but he was well groomed, and not until that work had been done to his own satisfaction did Enoch rejoin his comrades.

Then, lying at full length on the ground, they discussed the stirring events of the day, and it was during this conversation that Greene asked:

"Did you see that Irish woman when her husband was killed during the artillery duel—at the time the Royal Light-horse charged so furiously?"

"I didn't know there was a woman on the field!" Enoch exclaimed.

"There was, and her husband was one of our gunners. She assisted him during the hot cannonade by bringing water from the spring near by, and when he was killed at his post, there being no one to take his place, the piece was ordered to be removed; but she insisted on working it, and twice within an hour I saw her using the rammer as energetically as any man among them. The soldiers were cheering for 'Mary'—that is her name, I suppose—and she deserves more than thanks for this day's work."

Then each in turn related some incident which he had seen or participated in, until, despite the groans of the wounded, who were being tended by the surgeons at a temporary hospital near by, the three Philadelphia boys fell asleep, and when morning came were aroused by the tidings that Clinton had put his weary troops in motion at midnight, and stolen away.

The British soldiers whom General Lee declared the Americans could not stand against had been fairly beaten by men decidedly their inferiors in discipline and soldierly training.

. . . . . .

It was simply the purpose of this story to relate the adventures of the three Philadelphia boys during the events which led up to the battle of Monmouth, and with the triumphant ending of that engagement

the purpose of this imperfectly told tale has been accomplished.

Every reader knows that the Americans lost in this battle two hundred and twenty-eight; the British two hundred and fifty, sixty of these having been stricken dead by the heat.

It is believed that there were about fourteen thousand men in the American forces, and not more than ten thousand under Clinton.

The order which General Washington issued, congratulating his army upon the victory they had won, is also well known; but because those in whom we are particularly interested served in the New Jersey militia, the following extract may well be repeated:

"General Dickinson and the militia of his State are also thanked for their noble spirit in opposing the enemy on the march from Philadelphia, and for the aid given by harassing and impeding their march so as to allow the Continental troops to come up with them."

On the following morning, after making of the widow Mary a sergeant in the Continental army, Washington marched toward New Brunswick, thence to the Hudson River, which he crossed at King's Ferry, and encamped at White Plains in Westchester County.

It may, perhaps, not be necessary to add that some time after the battle Lee wrote an insulting letter to General Washington, demanding an

apology for words spoken on the field. He also demanded a court of inquiry, and was gratified. Washington caused his arrest on charges of disobedience, misbehavior, and disrespect. He was found guilty and sentenced to suspension of command for one year. He never resumed his station, and died October 22, 1782. "Had Lee been obedient and faithful in the morning, the whole British army might have been prisoners of war before the close of that memorable Sabbath day in June."

That Enoch succeeded in enlisting with his comrades is positive, for the names of the three boys are to be found on the muster rolls prepared in July, 1778, side by side, and that they afterward served their country gallantly may some time be told in detail, for their active service was not ended with the battle of Monmouth.

THE END.